DECEMBER 25, 1934

New Masses

Why Capitalism Can't Plan

By EARL BROWDER

The Executions In Soviet Russia

AN EDITORIAL

At Last, A Department Store Strike!

What About It, Mr. Wallace?

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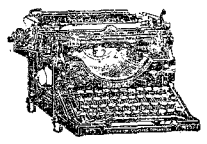

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New Masses

DECEMBER 25, 1934

WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS, W. Va., a winter resort in the Appalachians, sprang into the news this past week when ninety of the country's leading industrialists and bankers met to plot a campaign against the people of this land. Spokesmen announced to the press they "were working out a few broad principles upon which the entire business world can unite . . ." It required little detective work to gather from their discussion what their goals were: more direct control of the N.R.A. codes by the monopolies, and concommitantly, a general offensive upon wage standards and union conditions. These sessions were an extension of the recent meetings of the National Association of Manufacturers and the United States Chamber of Commerce. The big bosses are moulding a united front against the American people, the proletarians, the lower middle classes, all who do the work and shoulder the taxes. Simultaneously with the White Sulphur Springs conferences, Representative John W. McCormack and his Committee Investgating Un-American Activities were holding forth in Washington. Their program was coordinated with that of the Big 90 at their pleasant Spa in the mountains.

THE "leading citizens" know that to assail effectively the living standards of the working-class and the people as a whole, the offensive must start with a big push upon the vanguard of the masses—the Communist Party. Superpatriots paced the floor in the committee chamber slandering the Communist Party, its aims, its tactics, its members. When Clarence Hathaway, editor of The Daily Worker wired the committee on behalf of the Communist Party, demanding a chance to reply to these attacks, his request was ignored. Hathaway afterward telegraphed Representative McCormack:

> Your refusal to hear authoritative spokesmen of the Communist Party shows up your committee for what it really is: a tool of the Chamber of Commerce and the National Manufacturers Association in their openly announced drive to illegalize the Communist Party and to deport and imprison active Communists as the first step toward cutting workers' wages, speeding up production, cutting relief for the unemployed, and introducing fascist measures for the suppression of the workers' movement as a whole.

NEW WORDS TO AN OLD TUNE — *Phil Bard*

The Communist Party thereupon addressed itself to the masses in the A. F. of L. and Socialist Party warning that this move can mean only one thing: sharp revision downward in the scale of American living standards. Political rights, too, will be withdrawn; in short all these are measures introducing fascism. "The capitalists are cementing their united front," the Communists said in effect. "Let us mold ours." They urged fullest support of the Congress for Social and Unemployment Insurance in Washington, January 5 to 7. The united front of the exploiters, they insisted, must be opposed by a greater united front of the exploited.

THE chaos of European rivalries deepens to such a point that minor local incidents, such as those in the Saar, on the Yugoslavian border, in remote Somaliland, are enough to make the capitalist cabinets tremble and rush into diplomatic huddles. The latest news is that of the Abyssinian outbreak. Mussolini murders 100, after which he demands an "apology." France, with a valuable Somaliland seaport, Djibuti, is drawn into the broil. Italian-French rapprochment is threatened. The Saar is sizzling with explosive ingredients. The

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William Sanderson

recent beating of a British police officer, Captain Justice, after he had run down a woman on the sidewalk, may be no more than a case of reckless driving, but it causes the jitters among drivers of reckless European imperialism. German and French industrialists have lately been trying to compose their differences in the Saar, rich booty for both. The closeness of their interests is shown by the fact that Baron Roechling, mining lord and Hitler mouthpiece in the Saar, is nevertheless a member of the great French steel cartel, Comité des Forges. Fascists of opposing nationalities always manage to get together across frontiers to exploit workers, but meantime they go on arming against each other. The real enemy of all these big interests in the Saar, national and industrial, is the strong united front of Socialists and Communists, for status quo. Meantime Bulgarian fascists have arrested more than 500 Communists, among them forty high-school children and 100 soldiers. Seven have been executed, and forty-three are held for execution. But the American press hardly mentions this, while it prints streamer headlines because the Soviet Union cleanses itself of its white guard enemies.

A TURN for the worse is developing in the world economic crisis. France, Italy and China are equally beginning to disintegrate under the pressure of world events. But the weakest link in the chain of capitalist countries, outside of Germany, at the moment happens to be Belgium. Belgium depends for her prosperity largely on her export trade. In the face of the depreciated currencies of her trade rivals, of foreign tariffs and import quotas, she has maintained her place, while on a gold basis, in international commerce only through the lower prices of her exports. She was able to maintain lower prices by progressively cutting labor costs; that is, by continually reducing wages of her industrial workers. This can no longer be done. The Belgian workers are striking back hard. Further, the cutting down of the purchasing power of the Belgian masses has dried up the domestic market. Deflation is rampant. In the countries that have gone off the gold standard prices have recovered considerably from their depression lows (in the United States more than 30 percent), but in Belgium commodity prices have continued downward. They are now no more than 50 percent of what they were in 1929. There is no profit, or prospects of profits, and the flight of capital may force Belgium off the gold standard any day in spite of assistance from other members of the gold bloc, notably Holland and France. America, not in the gold bloc, has also helped, as we noted in a previous issue of THE NEW MASSES. But what makes the position of little Belgium more precarious is the rapidity with which the economic crisis in France, her chief financial prop, has deepened in recent months. Unemployment in France increases "at an accelerated pace," according to a despatch from Paris of December 15. The number of the unemployed at this time is estimated at nearly one and one-half million, which is "unprecedented" for that country according to the correspondent, and this number is expected to increase another half million by February. Business indices covering the month of November disclose drastic curtailment in production, continued commodity price deflation and an all-time record of business failures.

THE financial stresses that beset Fascist Italy are well known, and were confirmed in the announcement that the government will sequester the credits held abroad by Italian citizens. This step may make it possible for her to show parity of the lira, but only on paper. In the course of the past year Italy's gold reserves have fallen about one billion lire, and her foreign exchange holdings about 300,000,000 lire. Altogether about 700,000,000 lire is owed Italy on foreign balances, but because of exchange restrictions little of that sum can actually be transferred to Italian coffers. All this points to the inevitable cycle of commodity price deflation, contraction of productive activity, increasing unemployment and intensified deflation, leading to the enforced abandonment of the gold standard, which means artificially raising prices through reflating the currency. Finally, from the other side of the globe come the wails of China. The big imperialist boss of the Western World, Uncle Sam, has taken it into his head to inflate the currency of the United States through the purchase of silver in the open market at something like double the prevailing prices. China is the largest silver-using country in the world, and patriotic Chinese were not long in discovering ways of disposing of their silver holdings to the United States at the fancy market prices. Thus China is being denuded of its coin. This has resulted in drastic deflation, and a business crisis is in progress. Within the past month decreases in production have amounted to 25 percent in weaving and spinning; 80 percent in silk filiatures; 45 percent in electric appliances; 50 percent in iron works and glassware, and so on. Unemployment is mounting. Within a week two Shang-

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hai banks have failed. The crisis of world capitalism continues to spread.

THE people of the United States, during the past five years, could have had for their fuller life and comfort goods and services valued at 287 billions of dollars. This has been shown by the report of the National Survey of Potential Product Capacity, issued last week. The people could have had this plentitude, that is, if our economic system had been one that could have used to the full the present productive capacities of our country. Although we have the capacity to produce and distribute everything that everybody could desire, millions live in destitution, and many more millions in constant fear of becoming destitute. Could a more damning indictment of a whole system be written? The report further stated that even in the so-called prosperity days of 1929 "masses of population were inadequately fed and clothed." In that year 81 billion dollars were spent in goods and services but 135 billion dollars worth could have been produced. When food was abundant 16,000,000 families had not enough of the proper foods. We could have produced sufficient clothing for each man and boy to have a proper outfit; actually, the average annual purchase was half a suit per person. While 60 percent of our people live in inadequate homes there were the materials and labor to provide decent homes for all. And it is the same, the report goes on, with transportation, medicine, education, and the like. We can now produce enough for every family to have the equivalent of an income of $4,370 a year. But what conclusions are given? Were the crisis and economic ills of the boom days, needless, as the report says? They would have been—and this it did not say—only under a socialized society. They were not "needless," but in fact inevitable under capitalism. The only remedy the report offers is "higher wages." It does not explain why we do not have higher wages, why capitalism requires the lowest possible wages and the highest possible prices to survive. The report nevertheless is a valuable addition to our evidence that mass misery, unemployment, lack of proper educational and cultural facilities are the penalty capitalism imposes upon the majority, for the sake of private profits. It likewise indicates what an unparalleled civilization will be possible to us when this system of organized misery is destroyed.

WHEN Attorney General Cummings' Crime Conference last week omitted the topic of lynching from the agenda, Washington witnessed a remarkable demonstration by Negro students. Nearly one hundred Howard University undergraduates, co-eds, instructors and ministers surrounded Continental Hall where the hearing was being held. They stood on the curb ten feet apart. Each picket wore a slip of paper less than twelve inches long. Some of these bore the words, "5,068 in 52 years"; others, "83 women in 45 years." After taking their places in silence the pickets placed hempen nooses around their necks. They considered these extraordinary measures necessary because Washington's mediæval laws prohibit marching with signs and on the first day of the conference a number of the pickets had been arrested. But skillful organization was successful. In spite of the conspiracy to pass over lynching by the learned "criminologists" who were guests of the Department of Justice, the national capital was made lynching-conscious, the 600 delegates on the way to lunch were forced to see the grim spectacle and thousands of Washington people asked questions about it. Equally important was the effect upon the students themselves. Howard University receives government support. It has compulsory R.O.T.C. Its faculty and students have been under the influence of reactionaries—Dr. DuBois and the leaders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Howard students have hitherto stood aloof from the mass struggles of the Negro people, but on December 13 they learned the power of solidarity. It was the University's "week of prayer," and the subject was "Religion and the Class Struggle." Seventy-five students cut the chapel for the curb at Continental Hall.

THE Interracial Committee, composed of prominent Negro and white church members of Atlanta, recently declared that "American Negroes are traditionally loyal to their [sic] government," and that the committee "is unalterably opposed to the revolutionary philosophy of Communism, which advocates governmental changes by violent means and seeks to embitter certain elements of the citizenship against our democratic institutions and officials." One of these "democratic institutions" is the Georgia chain gang, to which Negroes are sentenced for organizing. One of the "officials" is the rabid anti-Negro John A. Hudson, a minister on Sundays and

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prosecuting attorney on weekdays. "Government" in Atlanta (as recent prosecutions have shown) makes it a capital crime to oppose war and Fascism, to belong to the International Workers' Order (a fraternal benefit body), to distribute literature in support of strikes, to advocate the unity of white and Negro workers—or to live in the same house with anybody who does these things. Police and Fascist hoodlums in Atlanta have raided the office of the Urban League, the Negro Y. M. C. A., and private homes. When Clarence Weaver, Negro delegate to the anti-War Congress, reported the Congress to three friends, Mrs. R. W. Alling, Nathan Yagol and Alexander Racolin, they were all arrested and charged with a capital crime under the same "insurrection" law that was used to sentence Angelo Herndon and six other Atlanta workers. Recently two white women, Annie May Leathers and Leah Young, were charged with "plotting insurrection" because they took literature on a textile picket line. The smug declaration of the Interracial Committee overestimates the "loyalty" of Atlanta Negroes toward such "government." The purpose of its statement is not truth but provocation. The Interracial Committee, representing reactionaries of both races, is a part of the systematic drive to break down the growing resistance of Negro and white workers united.

THIS is the Christmas season and befitting the occasion the hearts of the bourgeoisie have their warm moments. Those who have successfully exploited their workers for a year now pay out a little hush money, expand their souls in doing good to mankind. And The New York Times exploits itself, exploits these nice sentiments, and exploits the destitute by its "100 Neediest Cases" campaign. These are people, it says, whose burdens "cannot be lifted through public relief. These folks are in deeper need than that. They require more than work and food and heat and shelter; they require the guiding hand, the neighborly touch." The Times insists that none of the cases it tells about receives government aid. But it does not ask why they receive no government aid nor does it seek to obtain it for them. At the same time it campaigns for its "neediest" cases it glorifies the sales tax on the masses. These one hundred cases are selected out of millions equally needy. What does The Times seek to do? Does it try to obtain insurance for all the unemployed, and for all others who cannot work? Does it seek to create a constructive program for the remedy of such miserable and unnecessary suffering? It does none of these things: precisely the opposite. It valiantly upholds the order and system of things which creates these cases and then issues romantic appeals to the rich for the relief of one family out of ten thousand. THE NEW MASSES is deeply aware of such misery as The Times presents. It wants to eliminate conditions responsible for the plight of the "100." It does not appeal for charity for a few but campaigns for every measure which will ease the plight of the masses today and which points towards a society in which poverty and its concomitant, Christian "charity," will not exist.

PRAVDA, organ of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, is completing the largest and most modern printing establishment in the world. It cannot print enough copies, even with a press run of three million daily. There is a waiting list of two million, even though the paper is posted on nearly every street corner in all cities. There is not, at present, sufficient paper to satisfy the need. The official Nazi organ, the Völkische Beobachter, on the other hand, cries out with alarm at its steady loss of circulation. Every loyal Nazi is expected to subscribe to this sheet. Yet the circulation drops off by thousands each month. This is only one of the ways in which the Nazis are finding out that you can't fool all the people all the time. What does the Völkische Beobachter contain? Take one typical issue. On the first page is a picture of Hitler and a *"Proklamation des Führers."* The second page contains more of a speech of Hitler and a speech by Rosenberg. Page three has a picture of Hitler and one of William Randolph Hearst standing beside Rosenberg. The text is a continuation of Hitler's "cultural political speech." Page five is devoted to another *"Proklamation des Führers"* and a speech by Rudolph Hess expressing the nation's thanks to Hitler. Pages six and seven continue these speeches with two more pictures of Hitler. Such is the rest of the paper. How could they possibly expect to peddle such stuff? Of course the circulation falls off. The unemployed, the destitute, the millions of workers at the barest subsistence level will not spend their pfennigs for this rubbish. And certainly intellectuals and small shopkeepers pushed to the wall are not interested readers of endless tirades of vicious nonsense. In the Soviet Union the papers are of and for the working class. They recount the new victories in the building of socialism, they criticise and satirize the shortcomings, they investigate complaints. They are part and parcel of the lives of the masses, reflecting daily their hopes, struggles and aspirations.

STUDENT delegates representing millions of youth all over the world will convene at Lyons, France, Dec. 29-31 to fight against war, and to organize a world front against Fascism. The event will be the first International Student Congress Against War and Fascism, called by the student committee of the World Youth Congress of 1932. Word comes from Spain that 60 delegates have been elected there, in spite of the jailing and shooting of anti-Fascist students, and a magazine, Fronte Universitario, is being published as the organ of the arrangements committee. The Bulgarian Anti-Fascist Student Federation has pledged 11,000 *leva* to finance its large delegation. Other countries to be represented are the United States, the Soviet Union, England, France, Holland, Czechoslovakia, Canada and the Saar. The Congress will represent a united front of Socialist, Communist and non-political student organizations. In France and Canada Socialist students are actively participating in the preparations for the Congress. In the United States, the National Student League, the Student League for Industrial Democracy, and the Youth Section of the American League Against War and Fascism are working together to send the American delegation. Ten delegates have already been elected, three of whom will come from south of the Mason and Dixon line. Among the agenda of the Congress will be a determined drive against educational retrenchment and academic suppression. America is keenly aware of Hitlerism on the campus these days—particularly since Huey Long set out to corral the student vote. His antics, and those of President Robinson, in New York City, have put the students on guard. While college presidents and pundits either doze or engage in open reactionary tactics, students are awake to the future and are making revolutionary history.

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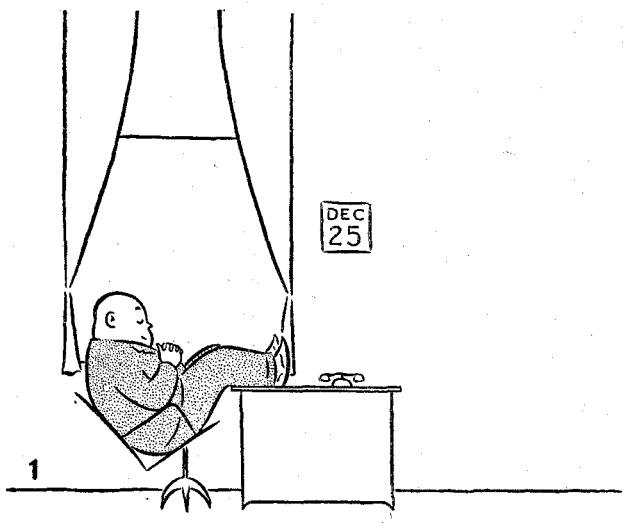

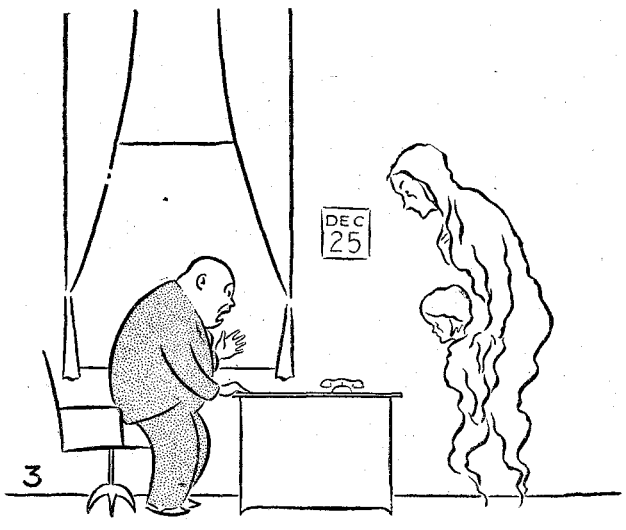

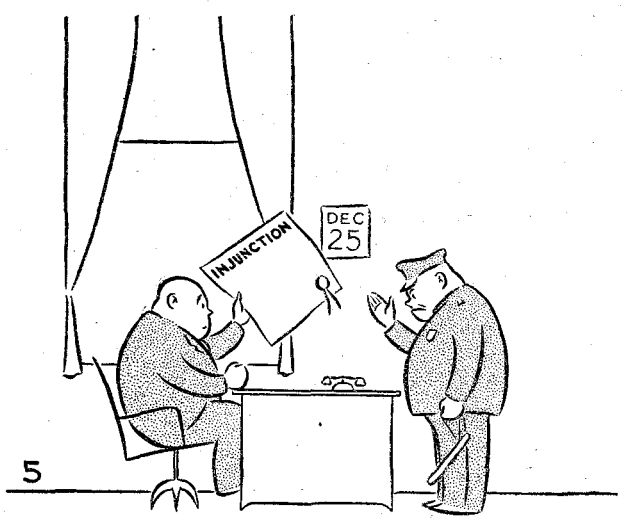

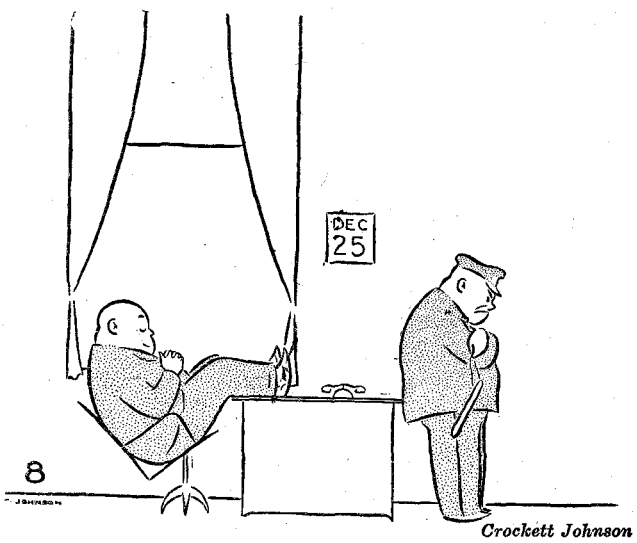

Crockett Johnson

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"Taking the Profit Out of War"

"THE time has come," said President Roosevelt recently, as he passed over one of his slick slogans to a slogan-hungry crowd of Washington correspondents, "to take the profit out of war." The slogan, upon being given publicity in the press, was greeted with wild applause and there was much throwing of hats in the air, particularly by the munitions boys. Irénée du Pont was quoted as being enthusiastic over it. "Fine!" he remarked when interviewed on the subject and other munitions makers joined in the general chorus of approbation.

The President's statement, however, was evidently a smoke screen, not only to cover his conviction that war is nearer than the average citizen is aware, but also to steal the show from Senator Nye's committee investigating munitions profits, which has been a constant source of irritation to Roosevelt.

It is quite evident that the President is interested, not in taking "the profit out of war," but in making it cheaper. The commission he named is certain proof of this fact and its purpose, though cleverly hidden behind anti-war pronouncements, is to lay plans which will make it possible for the government to place our major industries on a war footing immediately at the outbreak of hostilities. The report two years ago made by the War Policies Commission left no doubt of this fact; neither does the personnel of the commission which the President named to suggest legislation for the coming session of Congress.

The chairman of the body is Bernard M. Baruch, former head of the War Industries Board, sponsor of the N.R.A. and regular lecturer at the War College. He is assisted by General Johnson, late head of the N.R.A. and enforcer of the draft act under Major General Crowder during the World War; Major General MacArthur, and a host of cabinet and high administrative figures. Senator Nye's comment on the commission is worth quoting. Referring to Baruch, Johnson and MacArthur, Nye declared: "When I view in part the personnel of the commission, I cannot but think how unfortunate it is that Dillinger is dead. He was the logical man to write the anti-crime laws."

With Senator Bennett Clark of Missouri going Roosevelt one better with "a plan to take *all* the profits out of war" [italics ours] in American Legion officialdom style and with Senator Nye's announced plan to reintroduce his bill to impose a 98-percent tax on all incomes above $10,000 after the declaration of war, it is important to understand just what these gentry mean by "war profits." For the Associated Press dispatch of December 16 would have us believe that "Mr. Clark's measure is the most drastic of all those put forward, but the idea has long been favored by the American Legion and other service organizations. They sought, without success, to obtain such a recommendation from the War Policies Commission."

War veterans no doubt remember the ten-year agitation of rank-and-file legionnaires for "universal mobilization"—that is, for legislation which, in the event of another war, would "draft the dollar" just as men are drafted. Legion officers spoke throughout the country on the necessity for conscripting both labor and capital. Finally Congress created a joint Cabinet-Congressional Commission "to study and consider amending the Constitution of the United States to provide that private property may be taken by Congress for public use during war." The Commission also was to consider "methods of equalizing the burdens and to remove the profits of war, together with policies to be pursued in event of war."

The history of this Commission, supposedly conceived to take the profits out of war and transformed at birth into a jingoistic debating society, reveals that the very same capitalists who coined fortunes during the last world war are in control of the industrial war machine now being prepared for the next one. It shows, once again, the vicious futility of the policies pursued by William Green of the A.F. of L. and the American Legion leadership. It lays bare the direct tie-up between the War Department and the exploiters of labor during war and peace.

The witnesses before the War Policies Commission were a veritable parade of the owners, rulers and agents of capital. Among them was William Green, the $12,000 a year A.F. of L. president who opposed the West Coast longshoremen's strike as "unauthorized" by A.F. of L. officialdom and who knifed the great textile strike. In addition to agreeing with the American Legion witness on a 7-percent profit rate to be paid capital in war-time, Green echoed Daniel Willard, the $120,000 a year president of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, who had informed the Commission: ". . . I do not think it is right to take a man's property and use it for any purpose for the good of all of us and not let him make a reasonable profit. That, I think, he is entitled to in war, peace, or any other time." Green, after studying "the economics of the situation," declared: "I think we all agree, everyone who has studied the economics of the situation, that industry and capital are entitled to a fair return upon their investment under any circumstances—in times of war or times of peace." And what would Mr. Green recommend to the Commission? He would "take the profit out of war," that is, eliminate "profiteering" through the medium of "heavy war-profits taxes." This is a tax which everyone, including Green, knows was a notorious joker during the war, because of the impossibility of enforcing the cost-plus profit feature—an arrangement similar to the War Department's proposed plan for a 6 percent profit to industry based "on what it is claimed is the investment."

Thus went the hearings, the first indication of what sort of industrial machine is being constructed by the War Department and industrial magnates for their profit in preparing another war.

The War Policies Commission reported to Congress on March 7, 1932, a little over a year after the first public hearings. In the main, it recommended a constitutional amendment "to eliminate all doubt concerning the extent of the power of Congress to prevent profiteering and to stabilize prices in time of war." This program, its sponsors announced, would seek to prevent anyone receiving a "profit due to the war" (that is, anything above the so-called normal rate) by the imposition of war-time revenue laws taxing individuals and corporations "95 percent of all income above the previous three-year average, with proper adjustments for capital expenditures for war by existing or new industries." And to remove all doubt concerning its conception of distributing

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the war-time "burdens and sacrifices equitably," the Commission recommended "that no constitutional amendment to permit the taking of private property in time of war without compensation be considered by Congress." In other words, the Commission said that workers' lives should continue to be drafted. But private property? That's another matter.

The allowance for "proper adjustments for capital expenditures for war purposes by existing or new industries" is just a joker to make certain that the war profits will be as juicy as ever. Such ingenuity may not even be necessary in view of the fact that the heads of each industry will preside over the various military-business and price-fixing war boards that will dictate prices in their own fields. Furthermore, this provision fails to treat the certainty of huge profits through bulk war orders even if the concern in question has made only a 3-percent profit during the years previous to a declaration of war.

Fundamentally, when the Senate munitions investigating committee considers the "desirability of creating a government monopoly" of the manufacture of war instruments it, aside from the impossibility of controlling the hundreds of vital products that go into the making of war instruments, is doing nothing which will interfere with war. All the demagogic talk about the Nye committee's considering a means of "taking the profit out of war" serves to cover the fact that war is in itself a defense of capitalism whether or not profits are paid during hostilities. Whether the armaments industry is "nationalized," whether certain private property gets a profit return during war or after a war, the fact remains that profits accrue to the capitalist state. Whether or not the profit is paid directly in the form of the usual wartime six to eight hundred percentage or indirectly in the form of the preservation of the capitalist state is an academic question for those who wish to eliminate war altogether in the only way it can be eliminated, by overthrowing capitalism.

The Executions in Soviet Russia

SINCE Sergei Kirov was assassinated scarcely a newspaper has appeared without a headline and an editorial denouncing "Red terror." The capitalist press hopes to mesmerize a world into the belief that Torquemada lives again and his name is Stalin. This belaboring of the Soviet Union is significant. It comes when millions of people throughout the world are asking "Communism or capitalism—which?"

Although we do not have all the facts concerning Kirov's assassination we can present the following sequence of events:

On November 30, Premier Molotov announced that grain deliveries totalled more than 600,000,000 bushels compared to 390,000,000 in 1928. More than that: he announced a general increase in wages and the abolition of the bread-card system. News of the epochal advances of socialist economy in the U. S. S. R. had filtered into every capitalist land. Millions of foreign workingmen with belts tightened to the last notch read of these advances. (And the Japanese authorities can attest how hard it is to enforce their law barring "dangerous thoughts" from proletarian heads.)

The advances in collective farming were made through heroic effort and in the face of a world-wide drought which had resulted in actual famine conditions in many lands. The Soviet system had triumphed over natural catastrophe. But the Soviets had more than nature to combat; they had not yet cleansed their land of enemies. Counter-revolutionaries were secretly at work; a few had even wormed themselves into the Communist Party; they sabotaged grain collections in various parts of the country. A special cable to The New York Times of November 27 from Moscow tells of fifty-one collective farm managers and other executives "cleansed" from the party. "Twenty-two death sentences for sabotage have been imposed, according to the information from Tashkent."

As war threatens the Soviet Union from the East (Japan) and the West (Germany), these counter-revolutionaries had no difficulty in finding employers. They had to work overtime—there was plenty to undo.

During the latter part of November, seventy-one White Guards, well supplied with arms, were arrested in Leningrad and Moscow while plotting murder and sabotage. They were turned over to the Military Collegium of the Supreme Court for trial.

On December 1, Kirov was assassinated by Leonid Nikolayev, a former employe of the Leningrad branch of the now-dissolved Commissariat of Workers' and Peasants' Inspection.

The millions of workers and collective farmers were outraged by the act. Sergei Kirov was one of the most beloved of all their leaders. The enemies of the Soviet Union wasted no time in condoning the crime. Isaac Don Levine wrote in Hearst's New York American, "Kirov was a symbol of the Stalin system of planned hunger and his assassination is a portent to the Kremlin."

The Soviets understood this "portent" better than Mr. Levine. They have been warring against counter-revolution ever since they took power; they knew, too, that the expulsion of the interventionist forces after the years of civil war was not the end of the battle. Only the superlative tactics of the Soviet peace policy—and its endorsement by the world proletariat—has staved off the actual outbreak of war. The battle goes on constantly. "And one of the tactics of this battle," as Izvestia observes editorially, "is the creation of centers of disorder in the Soviet Union, the country of socialist order."

Therefore the Soviet masses acclaimed the decree of the Central Committee December 3 to "accelerate" the trials of these plotters. Preoccupied with building a new world, they demanded that there be no delay in destroying these subversive forces seeking to overthrow their socialist state. As Karl Radek wrote, "Our humaneness and our love of mankind consists in our preferring to have scores of White Guard scoundrels shot if necessary, rather than to have millions of workers and peasants suffer."

Sixty-six of the seventy-one apprehended White Guards were sentenced to death and executed. The cases of five of the accused were continued for additional information. The court established that most of the accused en-

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tered the U. S. S. R. through Poland, Latvia and Finland with the definite plan of throwing the country into chaos by assassination and every possible means of sabotage.

The press of the capitalist world had been able to bear up under the news of Kirov's assassination with considerable fortitude. It steeled itself against more such assassinations. But at the execution of these White Guards, the editorial writers broke down and wept in every language; the Soviet government was a government of kidnapers; worse, it was a government of assassins. It killed without trial. It killed innocent men. Women and children, too, were dragged out of their homes and stood against the wall. The New Republic compared the execution of these saboteurs to Hitler's "purge."

This comparison is sheer obfuscation. The Soviets have nothing to apologize for. Theirs is the dictatorship of the proletariat—of the masses, the vast majority. Fascist dictatorship is the instrument of the Thyssens, Krupps and Schachts. The proletarian dictatorship struggles for a classless society; the fascist strives to rescue capitalism. The proletarian dictatorship is the most powerful guarantee for peace; the fascist strives for war, hoping thereby to salvage the profit-system. The Hitler purge was the internecine brawling of these fascist brigands for power. The question there was "Which Nazi group shall wield the whip over the masses."

Harold Denny writes in The New York Times of December 16, "It seemed as if the government was deliberately warning its own people and inimical people in neighboring states that any unfriendly political activity would be extremely unhealthy." The millions of workers and farmers applauded this warning to the counter-revolutionary individuals within the country. But those with guilty consciences had reason to fear. Denny continues: "It is among the 'people of the past' . . . that anxiety is most apparent." And it is these people who, as he wrote, "have destroyed their pocket address books in order to avoid involving friends if they themselves should be arrested." The people of the past . . . !

The following telegram to Pravda from the people of the present and the future — the proletariat — is revealing of the general attitude: "We shock brigade workers on the Neva hydro-electric station pledge ourselves to complete it ahead of time as our answer to the dastardly assassination of Comrade Kirov."

The antagonism to the Soviet Union reached its climax in New York City where a united front of White Russians, Socialist leaders and Russian Social Democrats organized a meeting, presumably to protest against the execution of a hundred counter-revolutionists.

Among the speakers was Algernon Lee, one of the leaders of the Socialist Party. Mr. Lee delivered a long and violent speech against the Soviet Union, whose leaders he compared to the instigators of the Spanish inquisition and whom he denounced as the "greatest enemies of mankind." Mr. Lee was followed by Isaac Don Levine, Hearst's anti-Soviet specialist.

Mr. Levine is a journalist and professional Soviet hater, who has written for the Hearst papers most of his life and knows pretty definitely on which side his bread (white bread) is buttered. Mr. Levine's speech had all the ear-marks of having been written by Mr. Hearst himself. He denounced the Russian Communists as being Red Fascists; he described the Soviet Union as "a government of kidnapers," he compared the hundred White Guards who were executed to "Tom Mooneys" and expressed in the terms of yellow journalism what Mr. Algernon Lee had uttered in terms of lame pulpit demagogy.

Other speakers—Countess Tolstoya, White Guards and others—also contributed their bit to the general irrationality and were wildly applauded by the White Russians who had packed the hall to cheer indiscriminately every speaker attacking the Soviet Union, be he Socialist, Hearst agent, or White Guard.

What, however, was significant about the meeting was not that there are two thousand White Russians in New York City who will turn out en masse for an anti-Soviet meeting, but that Socialist leaders like Algernon Lee will make a united front with them. In 1917 and 1918, when the Soviet Union was desperately defending the very existence of a socialist state, these same White Russians, who so wildly applauded the speech of the Socialist leader, Algernon Lee, were shooting workers down in cold blood.

For some time now the Communist Party has made every effort and every concession it can make for a united front with the Socialist Party. It has been rebuffed time and time again, not by the rank and file, but by the Socialist leaders who would rather speak on a platform with the natural enemies of their rank and file than for an instant sacrifice their personal interests in furthering socialism. Algernon Lee and his confreres remained calm when hundreds of workers, Socialist as well as Communist, were stood up against a wall and shot down by the fascist government of Spain, but when a hundred counter-revolutionsts, planning to overthrow the only workers' state in the world are caught red-handed, he joins the counter-revolutionary forces to protest against their execution.

No wonder the Socialist rank and file absented themselves from Cooper Union. The Algernon Lees thundering from the pulpits can no longer obstruct the surge toward unity. They have made their choice and history will place them alongside the Kerenskys, the Kolchaks and the Kornilovs.

Kiangwan Civic Centre

For a certain class
to protect its property and persons
in Shanghai
it is necessary to maintain
in the International Settlement alone
7,155 armed guards watchmen constables
detectives sergeants inspectors
superintendents deputies commissioners
of european indian japanese chinese and russian
nationalities
besides which
the French Concession has its police force
the Chinese districts have their police and military forces
there is a citizens Volunteer Corps of all nationalities
a special corps of paid volunteer and reserve police
and numerous private spying and gangster organizations

AND IN ADDITION
to protect the property and persons
of a certain class
it is necessary to erect
at strategic street-corners in Shanghai
spiketopped steelsheeted gates
concrete blockhouses mounted guntowers
barbed-wire barricades bombproof ironsheds
and many other pretty things

All of this necessary
to protect the persons and property
of a certain class
who do not number
even one-half of one percent
of the toiling population of Shanghai

MIKE PELL

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At Last, A Department Store Strike!

From the New Masses Mid-West Bureau

MILWAUKEE.

LAST SATURDAY'S picketing concluded the second week in the strike of 600 workers of Milwaukee's large Boston Department Store. Three A. F. of L. locals are participating in this fight which, if it succeeds, will precipitate dozens of similar actions throughout the country. "Labor leaders" and N.R.A. officials are buzzing around thick and noisy but their attempts to confuse the issues have been decisively rejected by a picket-line encircling the store's four entrances. In addition to the members of the Retail Clerks' Protective Association, the Auto Truck Drivers' and Helpers' Union and the Building Service Employes' Union, the picket-line has been reinforced daily by members of the Unemployment Council and the Workers' Committee on Unemployment.

On Dec. 13, Federal Mediator H. L. McCarthy tried to negotiate a miserable settlement which offered a guarantee of the present weekly minimum for clerks with a straight percentage of net sales, an increase of fifty cents a week for non-selling employes who had been with the company for at least a year and immediate return to the jobs without discrimination. For three hours, James P. Sheehan of the Federated Trades Council and Joseph Padway, attorney for the State Federation of Labor and one of the sellout men in the Milwaukee car strike, backed McCarthy in trying to shove the settlement through. Then they were asked to leave the room, and for a few minutes the floor was given over to rank and file speakers. The vote to reject the settlement stood 494 to 19.

Mr. McCarthy had been anxious to see the thing smoothed over since "the federal government is much concerned over the Milwaukee department store trouble because it is one of the first of its kind in the nation and because of its effect upon department stores all over the country."

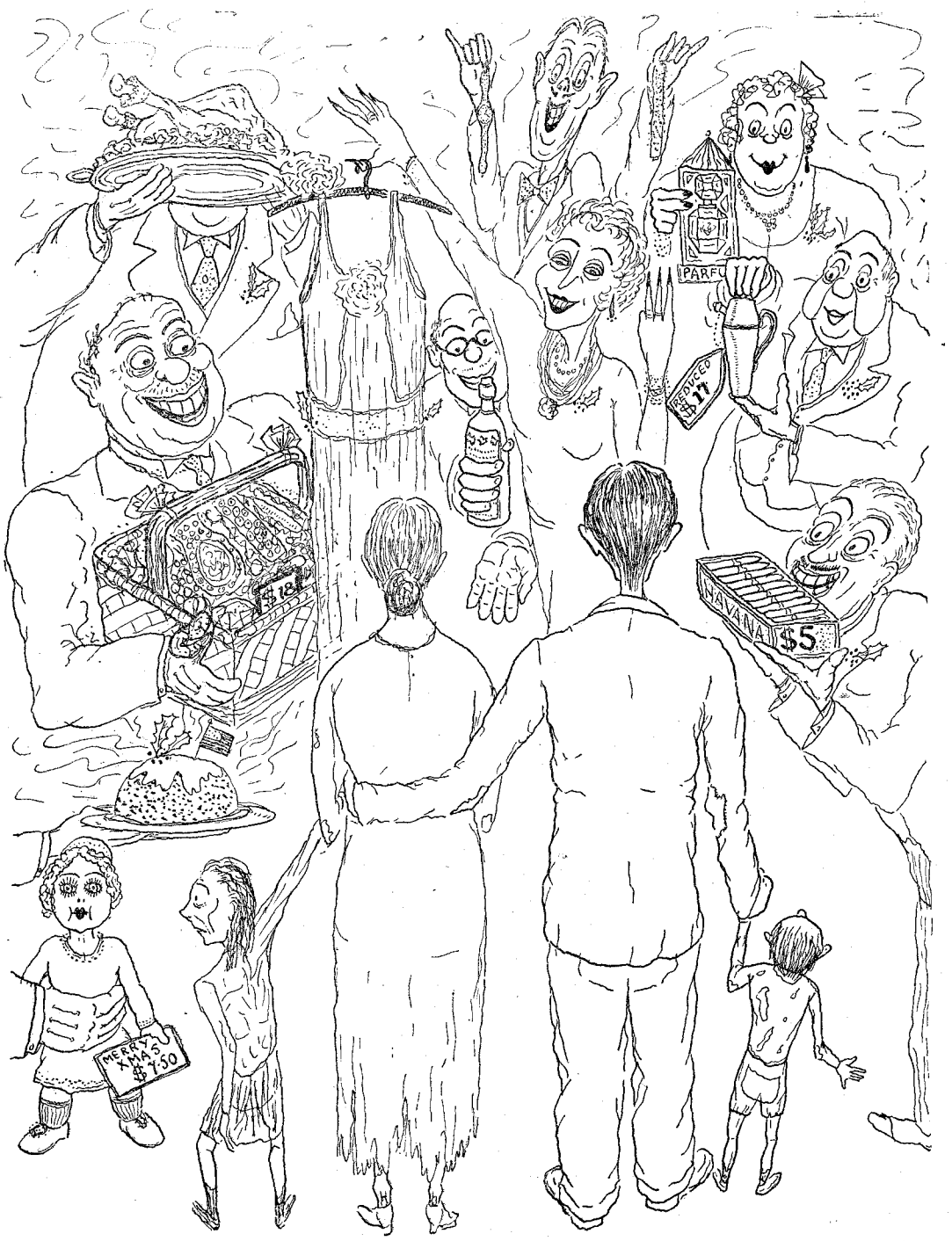
These are not empty words, Mr. McCarthy would have you know. As a result of the truck drivers' strike, the store is sending its packages parcel post, using the substation located inside the store. The postal employes are unorganized but A. F. of L. officials have succeeded in keeping union men of several crafts on jobs inside the store. Rank and file pressure for a strike of the electrical workers, painters and carpenters has been increasing. One carpenter said: "I can't walk through those picket lines any more with an A. F. of L. card in my pocket. I feel no better than a scab clerk."

The Boston Store is one of the richest in Milwaukee, "the store with the Christmas spirit," and it refuses to publish a statement of its profits. From the beginning of the strike it has been splashing double page ads into the local newspapers, including the Socialist Milwaukee Leader.

One of the family of owners finds enough money in the register to purchase ten pounds of meat daily for his dogs and to hire an expert imported from Europe to see that their stomachs remain in order. He has taken considerably less trouble to attend to the wants of Mrs. Alma Streeck, who has worked in the store for fifteen years, selling everything from diapers to diamonds. She receives $12.50 a week and a two percent bonus on sales above $252. This is the same bonus awarded the girls at the two-cent counter.

Mrs. Streeck has only her ill husband to support on this wage, but Albert Draws, a tailor in the women's dress department, has a family. He has worked in the store for the past twenty-six years and he used to get $35 but now he only gets $14.50. He has been one of the steadiest picketers through the freezing cold and the rains, and last week he collapsed and had to be carried home. But the next day he was back on the line.

Charles Mack, another striker, has kept a record for the past three years, putting down each hour of unpaid overtime and now the total comes to 2,463. He says: "When I came from the farm to work here I was strong and healthy. I lost 17 pounds from



Mackey

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overwork. One day, I came in after having worked until 2:30 A. M. the night before and the manager says to me, 'Charley, you look tired. I want you to take a week off.' Without pay, of course. That's how they work it. I got to watch myself. Day before the strike, my wife gave birth to a baby."

A friend and co-worker of Mack said: "I worked like two men and three horses for the last two years. I'm 27 years old and the father of three children and the five of us had to live on $18. Look at our budget. The company deducts $2.50 for furniture, $6 go to the landlord, a couple of dollars for milk, say five dollars for meat and groceries, a dollar carfare, then where are we? What worries me is when the kids need shoes. We can't afford any clothes or coal, either. So we borrow and borrow, and when the end of the week comes, we buy one loaf of bread instead of two. I was arrested Dec. 10 along with four others. Some woman was knocked down on the picket line and I stopped to pick her up. One of the cops said, 'Get the fellow with the blue corduroys'. That was me."

In the sixteen years that Fred Mezik had been freight carrier on the elevator, he has been the victim of three accidents. "When I first went out on strike, Superintendent Blersch called me in, said he was surprised to see me walk out, said he'd always taken care of me. The time I came back from recuperating after the incinerator explosion, I was cut eight dollars. That's what they call taking care of you."

Mrs. Frieda Baumann is 54 and her job was to instruct in knitting. She works forty hours a week, teaching between fifty and sixty women each day. Of the $16 she gets, the knitting goods companies pay $15 and since the Boston Store is required to pay her something as well, they add a dollar.

Other rackets flourish in the store. The Boston Store Mutual Association saps sixty cents a month from each worker. For this they receive a dollar-a-day sick leave, but only on condition that the company sends them home. If they go home without waiting to collapse, they get nothing.

They are determined to win their strike. Mayor Hoan's police tried to keep them from singing and shouting on the picket-line and Hoan's mouthpiece, Otto Hauser, has cautioned them "to avoid acts of violence." But support has been coming through as well. Workers from the Seaman Body plant have picketed as a group. The recently organized League of Women Shoppers paraded through the aisles of the store itself with banners pledging support. These same women brought hot coffee and sandwiches to the curb in their cars and served the pickets on the line.

After that, they formed their own picket-line which was joined by four regular pickets. The police termed it an "auxiliary picket-line" and ordered the four men out of it. They refused and were arrested. One of the women, Mrs. Andrew Biemiller, wife of the Socialist Party's educational director here, protested. The police piled her into the wagon on a charge of disorderly conduct. Later they were all released on $125 bail.

Despite the Christmas shopping season, the store experienced a 40 percent drop in business. In the first week of the strike, even 200 scabs had to be laid off for lack of trade. One of the butchers said: "On Saturdays we ordinarily serve 850 to 900 customers in the meat department but last Saturday we served only 320. Instead of ten barrels of shrimp being sold, only two were."

In its Dec. 15 issue the Wisconsin Voice of Labor, organ of Communist Party District 18, carried the headline, "Support the Boston Store Strike" and greeted the workers and the pickets in particular. It gave advice to the rank and file of the strike and from the vote against the settlement it is evident that its warning had been heard. The article carried the Communist Party's pledge to do everything in its power to rouse support for the strike.

Happy, Happy Noel

ROBERT FORSYTHE

RADICAL readers are almost no help to an author during the holiday seasons. In no case will they write in to ask if there is a Santa Claus and this makes it impossible to tell the story about Virginia O'Hanlon and the editorial writer on the New York Sun, who won undying fame by his answer. His name escapes us.

However, we are aware that Christmas is upon us and we are not unappreciative of our obligations to our public. We have had certain inquiries about the propriety of gifts for the Yuletide and what a girl of seventeen might give her boss of forty-eight and we have come upon a few trinkets which, without meaning too much in the way of sentiment, will make acceptable gifts for friends and relatives. We are indebted to the New Yorkers for assembling the information in such handy fashion that foot work was entirely eliminated.

For the ladies there is nothing, of course, so appropriate as perfumes and you will be happy to learn that Fortnum & Mason have outdone themselves this year. They have had competition from the favorites of other years and the French have spared no effort in making seduction a major industry but Fortnum & Mason have not been out-distanced. We list a few of our own choices:

> Matchabelli: Grace Moore is feminine, tantalizing, jeering and maddening all at once. Duchess of York (lilac predominates) still retains its fastidious public.
>
> Maybelle Manning: St. Jean d'Ete is for a woman who wants to get her man in the subtlest way possible.
>
> Lanvin: Her newest is Rumeur, very tangy and a bit satiric. My Sin is still a knockout.
>
> Fortnum & Mason: Town and Country, both impudent and light and challenging, are their own. Perfume baskets are made up here, either with these or Floris English-garden assortments; $15 to $100.

But there are also practical things to be thought of and we can do no better than quote The New Yorker about evening bags:

> The most sensational (and still the most practical) idea of the season is the evening bag that several beauty houses are putting out. Elizabeth Arden's, to our mind, would make a perfect gift for any woman (including those who Have Everything), since it is lovely in itself—with a metal frame, and velvet, moiré, lamé, and other fabrics outside—and contains all the necessary frivolities for an evening out. She provides lip stick, her new square metal compact for loose powder, a comb, a large mirror, and pockets for cigarettes, change and a latchkey; $18 to $20.

If the bags do not sound interesting, your friends may like something in the way of a Matchabelli cigarette case, $7.50 to $10; or a Peggy Sage manicuring set, $10; or perhaps a set of Kent brushes, very swank and English. A super-de-luxe set with rosewood tops had two military brushes and two clothes brushes; $100.

The stores have never seemed so full of fine things or so ingenious about showing them. From all reports it will be a good Christmas, with shoppers having an ideal choice and more being spent on the little things of uselessness and beauty than has been possible in the several previous years. There is happiness in the air and little excuse for anyone failing to get what he wants when so much care has been shown by the shops to supply it.

For men the problem is greatly simplified by such innovations as Mrs. Malcolm Whitman's homemaid ties which are being handled by Abercrombie & Fitch and are selling at $5. If that does not please him, he may be tempted by a new square golf bag ($50, in the best leather) or a Leica camera ($204). Naturally, the inner man is always to be considered in an emergency and if you have nothing better in mind you may consider a case of Great Western champagne or of Vat 69.

The child may have the usual toys but his season will be enlivened by such novelties as the swinging horses, $35 and up; or the Grocery Store, cash register and all, $28; or the scale model train, for which the locomotive alone sells for $125. The latter is particularly fine because it gives the child a sense of the power and effectiveness of machinery, which is so essential in understanding contemporary

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life. The full equipment of locomotives, tracks, stations, cars and the like can be had for something under $500 and we can think of no better investment for the younger generation.

Members of your immediate family may care more for personal apparel than for sprightly gadgets and that reminds us of what Mrs. Harrison Williams had to say to the press last week. Mrs. Williams had been selected by the Paris dressmakers as the best dressed woman in the world and it was said that it required $50,000 a year to complete the wardrobe of a woman of fashion. Mrs. Williams smiled when told the story. "I never spent that much on clothes during a year in all my life," she said. "I should say that where there is much visiting and entertaining and traveling $20,000 a year might be the nearer figure." This seems well within reason and our amazement is great that Mrs. Williams can manage at that scale. The point we are making is that nothing makes quite the Yuletide gift of a fur coat. At Bergdorf Goodman they have been showing beautiful models in fine dark mink, ranging from $2,000 to $9,500. It is hard to think that you could go wrong on a gift of that nature. In the more modest categories, we have the English fitted cases for women, specially priced at $135, but there is the possibility that your friend may already be swamped with them. Also in the second category may be considered the silver foxes at Hattie Carnegie at $1,000. Women are of two opinions about silver foxes and it would be well to sound out the recipient before committing yourself to something which could be extremely embarrassing to both parties.

And in an extremity, remember that jewelry is always acceptable. There was a time when giving it obligated a man in ways often not pleasant to himself but a saner attitude is now maintained. If done in the proper spirit, it is perfectly correct and eminently proper. Moreover, jewelry is still the most prized of all gifts. For that reason, the care with which it is selected to match the peculiar beauties of the recipient becomes of great importance.

But these are minor details in the larger problem which has been solved by the thoughtfulness of the shopkeepers themselves. They have made Christmas shopping so simple that it is a matter of selecting gifts for those you love and accepting tokens of their affection in return. There is something culturally broadening in the thought of the world being combed for beauty and novelty. We can be very happy in the certainty that no matter what we desire, we can find it in the shops of our merchants. Christmas is a time of joy and release. Christ is born! There is always the likelihood that you will get two mink coats and have to exchange one the week after the holiday but that is essentially more laughable than tragic and the pleasure of having what might be termed a smaller Christmas following upon the larger one is almost to be cherished.

Voices from Germany

A STREET in the central district of Berlin; a dark canal, an October evening with a cutting wind. Slanting roofs of small houses through the darkness of the evening. On Sundays groups of giggling young girls linger here—metal hair-bands around their braids, bronze swastika pendants between their breasts—and an elderly lady mourns, while her neck grows red above her black velvet collar: "And this is the old Inn 'The Nut-Tree'. Over there is an interesting quiet court, tumbled down, moss grown walls. Our good old Berlin . . ."

Two women with melancholy eyes stand in front of house number 45. They have just come from the market, with bags of cabbage in their hands. "Look up, but be careful, at the roof of No. 90 . . .," said one, looking down the street as she spoke. The other lifted her head, smiled a slow smile but said nothing. On the steep slate roof in thick, sprawling, white letters were the words:

"WE ARE HERE AND WE SHALL WIN. THE BERLIN COMMUNE."

Suddenly three men stopped in front of the women and stood there. The one with the thick lips and the flat nose above his Hitler-moustache, asked: "What floor does Merz live on, the mason Karl Merz?" The women drew together. They looked at each other. Their eyes, wide open for a moment, were quickly narrowed. Their hands held their bags more closely, became warm and shaky, until one woman angry, disturbed, surprised, said: "Merz? Listen to that! You ought to know that best. We were just talking about it. How can such things happen! You're from the police, aren't you? Well, a half hour ago the Storm Troopers took him away."

The men looked at each other. One shook his head and drummed with his fingers against his belly. The other spoke again: "So, he's already gone. And where to . . . we have the warrant, what a mix-up . . ." "Don't know," said the woman. "The long skinny guy was there and the little fat one with the big trap. Into the auto and away. We just saw it."

The men drove away in a taxi.

The woman stood in the room, in front of the bed, the dim light from the court falling on her face. Her heart pounded heavily, she had to wait before she could speak. Then she spoke quickly, softly, and urgently: "Karl, hurry, hurry, hurry! They are after you!" The terribly tired man in the bed jumped up. He had been lying with his clothes on, his hair was stuck to his forehead, his shirt was open, showing a blue tattooed sledge hammer. He looked at the woman, his eyes still hot with sleep, and said slowly: "Then I must get the leaflets right away. They must . . ." "No, you must disappear," the woman interrupted. "They might come any minute . . . You must go right away, they mustn't find you. I will take care of the leaflets." The man washed himself quickly at the faucet, the water spattered on the floor. The woman cut bread, stuck it into his coat pocket, and asked: "Tell me honestly Karl, are there any papers in the house? I'm not afraid, really not, but I want to know. You can tell me, even if I'm not in the Party . . ." "No, there's nothing. If Bruno comes, he shouldn't go on to the roofs tonight, hear? They'll pick him off. I have to go now, say good-bye to our boy . . ."

The woman shook the bed up, threw a few chairs over, pulled clothes out of the bureau, broke a plate on the floor and sat down thoughtfully at the kitchen table. Ten minutes later there was a knock at the door. The woman knew there would be a knock. She was quite calm, but she rumpled her hair, then opened the door. Three armed men.

They came in quickly. The one with the Hitler moustache said harshly: "You lied! The Storm Troops don't know anything about it!" "My God! Who dragged him away then? Where can he be? Go look for him! He's not here. They must have carried him off somewhere." The men went into the room, noticed the disorder and listened when a voice from the courtyard called out: "Look out! The Storm Troopers are at Merz' again!" They bent down, looked under the bed, in the wardrobe, and one whispered a few times: "Bad organization, everything goes wrong. Pretty soon the guys in the S. A. will be getting all puffed up." The men went.

Two hours later the woman walked to Molkenmarkt Square. There she took the street car for a few blocks, then went into a subway station and left it by another exit. In a little park at the north end of the city, she sat down at the end of a bench. Her husband was sitting at the other end of the bench, staring straight in front of him, smoking.

It was quiet. Darkness was falling among the trees. They both listened. They leaned back. They could hear each other breathe. Then the man asked: "Have you got the leaflets?" "Of course I have them," said the woman, "I have them under my skirt. I'll drop them. Then you can sit here and I'll go."

The woman bent over several times, until there were a few rolls of paper under the bench. Before she stood up, she whispered: "You must be careful, Karl. We will see each other as we arranged. It will be difficult for me but I'll manage. If only I weren't so worried about you . . ." "Doesn't do any good," he said. "Be brave, greet the boy; I'm glad you came . . ." His voice sounded quite different . . . strange to the woman.

When she came into the dark street, the woman noticed that there were figures on the roof opposite. But the letters gleamed, the letters and words of the commune.

WALTER SCHOENSTEDT.

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Will the Farmer Go Red?

4. What About It, Mr. Wallace?

JOHN LATHAM

DES MOINES, IOWA, Nov. 1.

THE four lower tiers of counties in southern Iowa are what the experts at Ames call the "problem area." The soil is poor, erosion has in places worked damage that never can be repaired. Relief people working in the area comment on the low standard of living. The County Agent of Davis County admits that the usual income of farmers is small; the average farm is 160 acres and to be profitable should be twice that. Yet in the same breath he gives the opinion that the farmer is all set for better days. The severe cuts in grain and cattle have got rid of the "surplus" and the farmer, so he says, may now expect a price.

No wonder a farmer attempting to explain the prejudice against county agents says they are of no more use to him than a dry cow. On the table, as this county agent prognosticates his cheerful future, are figures to show that the drive against farm surplus coupled with drought has got the farmer up against a threat of dire scarcity. 54 percent of the usual number of hogs in Davis County are on hand, 75 percent of the cattle, 87 percent of the sheep. At the same time *only* 15 percent of the normal feed is available. Hogs were sold at unusually light weight this year as it didn't pay to hold them. Corn is too dear in the great Corn State. The drought and chinch bugs hit the problem counties and where Davis County farmers got 1,500,000 bushels of corn other years, they got less than 10,000 bushels this year. Usually they have 750,000 bushels oats; this year none. The usual crop of hay, timothy, clover and alfalfa, runs to 50,000 tons; this year it didn't amount to more than 1,000 tons. All oats were destroyed so they sowed the 20,000 oat acreage to soybeans and where they usually got 20 bushels to the acre, they didn't get five bushels.

Farmers in Davis County got a record crop for all time in 1932 and a 70 percent crop in 1933 yet there are no reserves on hand to meet the feed shortage. Pressing mortgage and interest debts forced the farmer to sell those crops at a pitiful low figure in order to realize some cash. This year the crop is small and stays on the farm to keep alive the stock. The only cash flows in from benefit payments paid for not raising crops. Even this money continues to drain into the same capacious maw. The county agents, even certain farmers, may say they are lucky to get such benefit payments in a drought year but there is doubt in the farmer's eye as he says it. He is not certain that he has not shackled himself to a program that will continue to regulate him in bumper years.

He wonders what it is all about. He sees that the planners are even unable to help him to keep his stock, in spite of all their experimentation. The farmers in Davis County can not call on the more plentiful counties for aid in wintering through their stock. Experts had met at Ames and in long confabs had suddenly faced the ominous fact that although a large part of Iowa was not touched by drought, the total crop for the state was way below normal. Moreover drought cattle had been moved upon Iowa pastures to winter through and would need feed. A check-up showed that in spite of the brain work of planners an actual scarcity of feed was at hand. Iowa had been told she would have to take care of her own, not expect outside help, and as a result individual counties were put upon the same self subsistence rule. The County Agent of Davis County, an alert and intelligent man, has an antiquated machine of outmoded economy to operate. He does, within that framework, what he can.

He came back to his farms and set about making a survey. Farmers who had enough feed for cattle, need not reduce. Farmers who could not winter through, must reduce. Again, the little fellow, already handicapped, must lay his head on the block. With corn bringing 87 cents and higher, farmers who raised crops and who signed reduction programs must be thinking about their lost opportunities to sell more at a profit rather than pocket bonus checks for not producing.

The farmer in Davis County cannot exactly celebrate a jubilee over his benefit checks. In all, $315,000 poured in from the federal government on cornhog money, cattle and sheep and the sealed corncrib. The mortgage debt per tillable acre in Iowa still stands around $66. Taxes and interest are high. There are 310,000 acres in the county. The money may keep the small town stores open but will hardly buy new clothing, machinery or even feed or seed. The reduction program has raised the price of corn so high that the majority of farmers can't buy it and they are in the position of buyers not sellers of corn. Their only hope of the future, maintaining a herd, is fast vanishing. Herds will be cut this winter drastically, and the small fellow is the one who will make the sacrifice because he has no reserves and no cash to purchase feed.

With the big fellow it's a little different. He's not satisfied and one of the peculiarities of the picture is that with new situations in the middlewest, new contradictions continue to arise. The big fellow benefits but is disgruntled and feels that the packer and the big grain man were chiseling his profits. No one is satisfied. But if the big fellow is kicking, it's because he expects to hog everything. Right now, in a Nebraska county a big farmer is getting $1,300 every month on a feed loan for his cattle and was not required to reduce one animal. The Federal Reserve had already loaned him $55,000. In the same county a man with a $4,000 mortgage on 250 acres of land and a nucleus of eight milk cows, eight steers and eight young heifers, seventeen hogs and twenty sheep is in a bad way. He has four children and they are having Sunday dinner in a house that has not one convenience. The chairs are scraps of wood, an old sofa sags in a corner, even window plants seem to droop. Around the dooryard, bare of a single blade of grass, a couple of lean pigs scurry away and a few bedraggled white chickens, too thin to kill and too poor to lay eggs, pick at heaven knows what invisible food supply in the naked earth.

This man has managed to get a good meal for his family today. They have vegetables for the first time in weeks. Nothing grew in the garden this bad year but today potatoes and cabbage help to make palatable the fat back that is the last of a pig slaughtered. There is even an apple pie. The harassed man confides that he bought the food with money out of the feed loan lately secured for his animals. The loan amounted to forty dollars for a month's feed and was given with the proviso that he reduce his stock. The eight steers must go, seven of the hogs; an old white horse, the children's pet, was ordered killed. He knows that he needs actual food relief for his family but he is fighting off applying for it because they will then require him to reduce his animals to ten units. Such a poor farmer cannot get feed relief on a note, he is not trusted that far. He must pay cash, in other words, work out twenty-five dollars a month on the road at thirty cents an hour. The big fellow can borrow, needs only sign his name, and keep his herd. When and if prices pick up, he is able to cash in on the situation but the little fellow is down and out forever.

This farmer who has bought a Sunday dinner for his family sees all this. He thinks relief has spread stagnation over the land. The Holiday movement is at a standstill. Farmers are in such need they are for the moment holding their breath. This man doesn't see how he can pay his mortgage debt of $270 a year and taxes of eighty dollars when his one asset, his young stock, is taken from him. He wants to keep his children in school, give them proper clothes. The winter looks very dark to him but as we go riding over the hills to another farm house his little

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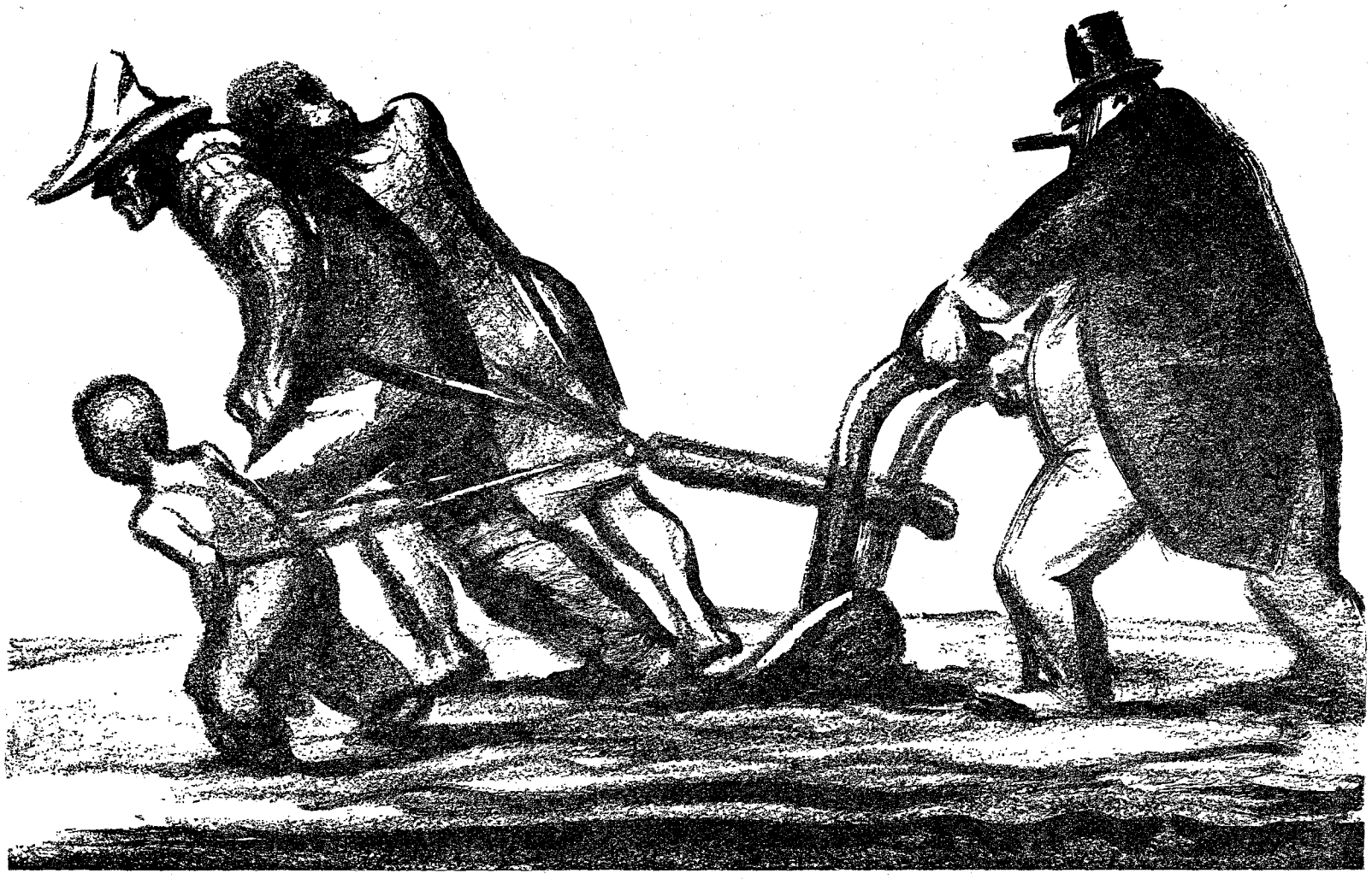

Jacob Burck

girl with the bright eyes begins singing *Solidarity Forever* that she picked up at a farm picnic the other summer. The father in the back seat forgets his troubles as his voice joins hers. The wretched sand hills, the bare outlines of stripped trees all blur as the song goes by.

As we ride along the farmer points out the house where a fellow lives who is on human relief. He has been trying to get money for clothing for his family. He sold some stock but as soon as he did, they chopped off the relief and made him spend his cattle money on food. Then he got extra work to do from a neighbor and the same thing happened. An invisible eye seemed to follow him around to spy on him and prevent him from clothing his family. And in this county, the relief director asked what he thought the relief load would be this winter, answered soberly, "Sky high."

There are even rules about food persons on relief may buy. Farmers told me they wouldn't let them buy fruit, made them take molasses which they hated, instead of syrup. A storekeeper gave out syrup to satisfy his customers and when he sent in his redemption slips for nine dollars they made him foot the bill himself. Bellyachers are yanked off relief pretty quick unless they mass in such big numbers that they cannot be ignored. They have massed for action again and again and the poor farmer on relief will brace his pride by narratives of how they stopped a sheriff sale, how they forced relief for a family denied it.

They are pretty certain that if foreclosures have halted it is due to their action. They think that when prices begin to rise that foreclosures will begin again. They are not saying much but they know what they intend to do when that time comes.

In Iowa the three great foreclosure ogres are Metropolitan Life, Equitable Life and Connecticut Mutual Life Insurance Company. Equitable owns 10 percent of all mortgages in the state, says Prof. Murray of Iowa State College at Ames. Up until last summer they were foreclosing unmercifully. Prof. Murray believes that some farmers think it only right for creditors to foreclose but the more radical do not feel that way and they are responsible for the moratorium. With all the talk of scaling down debts, very little has been done in that direction. Murray could give only one instance where any considerable scaling had been done. He admitted that the rate of scaling down on a debt is less than 5 percent and many insurance companies prefer to wait rather than reduce the mortgage or foreclose. Foreclosure today means doubtful tenancy and jeopardizing the entire debt. The insurance companies are betting on Roosevelt and are waiting. If prices pick up, if crops increase, these fellows will be on deck with outstretched paws.

A farmer has just refinanced his debt to the Union Central Life Insurance Company. He is a bachelor and his neighbors say that if anyone could have got ahead, it's George. Still he has a mortgage for $5,500 at six percent and he owes interest for two and one-half years, owes a feed loan to the government for $125 and $75 on a bank note. He is borrowing from the government to pay the insurance company, thus giving them a very pretty break considering the state of agriculture. He will have to throw his check for the corn-hog proposition amounting to $260 into the pot and hand over a five percent on the $6,100 refinancing deal to the government for what they call "stock." In return he gets $5,900 cash to pay his debts and finds himself saddled with a new mortgage and a new master. He now owes $6,100 instead of $5,500 but his interest is reduced one percent on that amount. This farmer is scratching his head over his new deal and puzzling why it is that even his cornhog check, the only cash he has seen in a long time, also disappeared in the shuffle.

Money supposedly offered so magnanimously by a benevolent government to farmers for reducing crops has often as not drifted at once back to the government in payment of old feed and seed loans. In Knox County, Nebraska, seventy percent of the old feed loans and fifty percent of the old seed loans have been paid off but because of the feed shortage it does not look as if the farmers would consent to divert their money to repayment of such debts. Farmers in North

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and South Dakota were up in arms at being forced to pay off old feed loans by road work when their present emergency was so acute that only immediate aid could save the cattle remaining to them. Relief directors and especially investigators tell of these little revolts with uneasy eyes. Even town people boast rather proudly of the spirit in the farmer that would revolt if relief were not ladled out to him.

Only too often a remark is heard, ominious and suggestive, one that I heard again and again in Germany in 1930. "It seems as if something is about to happen. I just wish if it was going to happen, it would happen and get it over with." Already in Loop City, Nebraska, and Marshall County, South Dakota, savage hands have ripped out against the militant farmers from the antagonistic small town crowd, with blood in their eyes, champing at the bit, roaring and ready to go. What holds them back? Farmers talk openly in meetings against fascism and even as they talk, alignments are being made from above, economic divisions will make cleavages that the farmers themselves do not as yet suspect. Events are rapidly making farmers conscious of where they stand.

Here's an old farmer who has just received a letter from a one time boyhood pal, a man who had made millions in a chain store in Chicago. The Chicago man is raving against the millions being ladled out in relief. He is indignant that the people he calls "the worthwhile people, those who built up the country, that laid the golden egg, that minority who produced the wealth should be crippled by the beggarly ninety percent who are too shiftless to fend for themselves." The old farmer has just let go a farm for a $15,000 mortgage debt. He had put $36,000 into the place. He is in no mood to swallow his friend's letter and reads his own indignant reply. "The farmers who opened up this country and tilled the soil, they are the producers, they and the millions of consumers laid the golden egg not the munition makers and the big trusts who plundered the common people." Then he ended, "but in spite of politics, we are friends, Charley."

Yes, he is friends. He looks up from reviling his millionaire friend, from the defense he supposes he has made for the common people and with a foxy smile disparages all organizations for farmers. He is for "cost of production" without the faintest idea how to get it. He is against any efforts of the farmer to protest in groups, says that the American Legion knows how to handle such riff-raff. But not far down the road is a farmer who will tell you he didn't used to believe in mass action but he has to now because he has seen it. A woman will start up from a kitchen chair. "Don't talk to me about doing without and getting along on less. Aren't we ever to be done with pioneering?"

No wonder even an editorial writer for the Sioux City Journal, feeling the insidious pressure of mass opinion welling up all around him, comes out with the remark that, "There is dissatisfaction among the masses; people are not satisfied to live as they have lived; they are not content to see wealth concentrated in the hands of a few in a land of plenty."

That's the rub. These states may vote the Democratic ticket out of uncertainty and fear of the future, out of nervousness that relief may be stripped from them, but ask a farmer what he thinks of the A.A.A. and like as not he will reply as did a farmer near Clinton, Iowa, that "It looks to me like a new set of harness for the old mule."

The government may dangle a subsistence homestead before this fellow but the bait will have to be better than a $3,000 mortgage on a ten acre plot. Farmers on submarginal land may be paid five dollars an acre but it is no Santa Claus gift. Where can they go on that? What land worth cultivating can be bought? What is to become of them? The loud ground swell of insistent questions about the farmers' future, will have to be answered. The beauty of it is that the poorer the farmer the more horse sense he seems to have, the less he seems bothered by the swarms of ideas and panaceas that buzz around his head like flies.

He will talk monotonously by the hour of "victories" he and his fellow farmers won when they prevented the sheriff from taking away a neighbor's mortgaged corn, when they kept the banker from putting out a family in order to foreclose. The old farmer with the $15,000 mortgaged farm that he allowed to be ripped from him, may still be friends with "Charley" but the poor farmer is friends with no one except fellows like himself or those who see as he does the whole problem of his liquidation under the name of a new deal.

What will happen to this fellow is problematical if one thinks in terms of immediate future but no one who knows the insistent nature of the farmer and his stubborn horse sense would hesitate to say that he will struggle for his rights. Sooner or later he will have to face the implications of what he considers his rights and ask himself if within the present framework of this system he imagines that dream can ever be realized. The beginnings of this questioning and realization have gone further than most farmers themselves know. Split as many of them are on various issues, they do not realize the unity of their needs. The repetition of these needs, coming over and over from farmers who read the papers and farmers who are too poor to buy even that much, from fellows near the Canadian border and men in supposedly "good" sections in Iowa, this is the significant detail, knocking like an insistent fist at a closed door.

John Latham's fifth article, in next week's issue, will deal with the fascist threat in the Middle West, embodied not so much in Silver Shirt organizations as in economic alignments forced on the farmer from the top down.— THE EDITORS.

San Francisco: 1934

PAUL COURTNEY

SOLIDARITY

Of course the papers
lied
whychrist
the funeral reached
the length of Market St.
and then some
eight abreast.
Twohundredthousandpeople
saw it
easy
sure.
We marched
without a word
our shoulders
hard
against eachothers' shoulders—
I happened on the side
and in my free
tight fist
I felt the strength
to grab
the world.

COMRADES

Theres hundreds left, they say
and every night or two
they meet
and stuff their pockets
full.
Each morning
workers
find the truth
upon their porch
or maybe blown
amongst the red
geraniums.

DREAM

There's something
funny
in my being here
and waiting
moving slowly forward
with this silent line
of men and women dear to me——
I must
I've got to laugh
or something——
jesusgod.
I mean
wellhell
it's really funny
in the sense of laughing
at that—god
that flashing guillotine
and
and

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Why Capitalism Can't Plan

EARL BROWDER

The following paper by the General Secretary of the Communist Party was presented at the recent Regional Conference on Social Planning, held in New York.—THE EDITORS.

"ECONOMIC plan" has become the current magic phrase. It is invoked as the answer to all current difficulties. It sanctifies all sorts of policies, no matter how insane. Of all the current talk about planning, about 99 percent can be classified as either (1) idle chatter, or (2) proposals for planned destruction, that is, a form of economic suicide.

Roosevelt's New Deal policies give the type of current "economic plan" which requires our evaluation. Mr. H. G. Wells, in his recent autobiography, expresses the current idea when he places the New Deal alongside the Five Year Plan of the Soviet Union, as the two outstanding examples of "planning." How such a phantasy could gain mass currency is a tribute to the capacity for myth-making and uncritical faith that still exists. The slightest examination of the New Deal reveals such depth and sharpness of inner contradiction; such studied unrelatedness of its parts, to one another and to the whole; such complete absence of any unifying principle, or even viewpoint and approach, as to secure for the New Deal the rightful position, not as an example of social-economic planning, but rather of its antithesis.

This is true whether we approach the question from the point of view of production, that is, with a demand for the fullest possible utilization of the productive forces; or from the angle of distribution, that is, with a demand for a guaranteed minimum standard of decent living for the masses. The New Deal moves not a step toward either demand, but rather in the opposite direction.

The outstanding characteristic of the New Deal is its planned destruction of accumulated stocks, planned limitation of production, while simultaneously a big section of the population, from one-fourth to one-third, is excluded from economic life, continues to live only by grace of charity doles, which reduce living standards to a point hitherto associated only with Asiatic coolie labor.

Thus, the New Deal "planning" does not overcome the crisis, but only intensifies it. Where the spontaneous forces of the crisis destroy blindly, the New Deal tries to substitute planned destruction; that is a difference, but it is not a difference in direction or of fundamental quality. Along with this necessarily goes a systematic reduction, absolute and relative, of living standards of the masses. The New Deal does not plan to overcome the crisis, but tries only to give the crisis itself an organized character.

The New Deal is shot through and through with contradictions. Roosevelt's right hand must not know what his left hand doeth. The N. R. A. cancels the results promised by the A. A. A. The R. F. C., P. W. A., C. W. A., etc., cancel the "economy program." The inflation cancels the promised increase of mass purchasing power. Out of the conflicting policies emerges the net result of greater monopoly of riches at one pole, deeper poverty at the other; stronger organization of predatory finance capital, with deepening chaos and disintegration of economy as a whole; mounting volume of talk about cooperation of classes, of civil peace, but in life more and sharper class struggles.

Are these contradictions avoidable, or are they inevitable?

They are inevitable—so long as the premise is taken that the capitalist system must be maintained. They are avoidable — when the premise is taken of the full utilization of all productive forces, and the removal of all influences and controls which hinder this full utilization, that is, the removal of capitalist private property in the means of production. Not Roosevelt, nor any other, can overcome the contradictions while he remains within the limitations of capitalist property relations. Capitalist economy and planned economy are fundamentally in contradiction and mutually exclusive.

This explains why all the furore about planning, all the Brain Trusts, all the State Planning Commissions at work throughout the United States, all the books about planning, all the research of the higher institutions of learning—are all so singularly barren of results. It is not because all these brains are of inferior quality, but because they have been given the impossible task of reconciling the irreconcilable.

In contrast with this barren chatter about a planned economy in the United States, stands the experience of scientific planning and the execution of these plans, in the Soviet Union. The first Five-Year Plan was really carried out; not only that, it was exceeded. The second Five Year Plan is already bringing "backward" Russia up to the front ranks of all industrial nations. There, alone of all countries, there is no crisis. There alone, all productive forces are fully utilized; there alone, therefore, do these productive forces grow—and at a rate never before seen in the world.

The planned economy of the Soviet Union is not some accidental discovery nor is it the result of national peculiarities of a momentary situation. It is the direct outcome of the best, most scientific thought of mankind. It was clearly projected as long ago as 1848. It is in the direct line of development from the *Communist Manifesto,* written by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. It was further developed by V. I. Lenin and the modern Communist Party (Bolsheviks), and realized itself in the planned economy of the Soviet Union. It demonstrated its independence and virility by progressing even more rapidly, under the guiding hand of Joseph Stalin, during the period when the capitalist world fell into deepest crisis.

Surely it would seem that a serious approach to the problems of a planned economy would require mastery of those scientific theories which have actually produced the only example known to history.

The Necessity for Choosing Sides

Marx and Engels, as far back as 1848, foresaw the whole course of capitalism. The *Communist Manifesto,* written then, reads like a contemporary description of the present crisis. Allow me to quote:

> Society suddenly finds itself put back into a state of elementary barbarism; it appears as if a famine, a universal war of devastation, had cut off the supply of every means of subsistence; industry and commerce seem to be destroyed; and why? Because there is too much civilization, too much means of subsistence, too much industry, too much commerce. The productive forces at the disposal of society no longer tend to further the development of bourgeois property; on the contrary, they have become too powerful for these conditions by which they are confined, and as soon as they overcome these limitations, they bring disorder into the whole of bourgeois society, endanger the existence of bourgeois property. The conditions of bourgeois society are too narrow to comprise the wealth created by them.

Capitalist crisis, thus described in 1848 by Marx and Engels, finds its supreme example in the present condition of the capitalist world. It can be solved only by destruction and violence. If the conditions of bourgeois property are to be maintained, this can only be accomplished by the destruction of the excess wealth and productive forces, and the most violent suppression of the suffering masses who have no interest in such property. If the productive forces and accumulated wealth of society are to be preserved and further developed, this can only be accomplished by the destruction of bourgeois property rights, and of the institutions by which they are maintained, with the necessary accompaniment of suppression of the exploiting minority and their agents.

Thus, some form of violence and destruction is unavoidable. This is not something to be chosen or rejected. The only choice is between the two sides of the struggle.

If bourgeois property wins the immediate fight, at the expense of the masses of the population and by destroying vast wealth and pro-

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ductive forces, this by no means represents any permanent solution of the problem. It only reproduces the contradictions on a higher scale, with a more violent crisis ensuing. That is why the more successful are the immediate policies of Roosevelt, for example, the deeper grow the general difficulties, contradictions and antagonisms.

But if the progressive forces in society overcome bourgeois property, then history leaps forward to a new and higher stage. Then a planned utilization of the full productive possibilities once and for all releases humanity from the tyranny of man over man and of nature and things over man; mankind emerges into the era of freedom.

This is possible because today, as distinct from past revolutionary periods of history, the revolutionary class is the working class, which is itself the greatest productive force, which is the foundation of society, and which cannot free itself without freeing the whole human race. As Marx and Engels said:

> Of all the classes that stand face to face with the bourgeoisie today, the proletariat alone is a really revolutionary class. The other classes decay and finally disappear in the face of modern industry; the proletariat is its special and essential product. . . .
>
> All previous historical movements were movements of minorities or in the interest of minorities. The proletarian movement is the self-conscious, independent movement of the advanced majority. The proletariat, the lowest stratum of our present society, cannot stir, cannot raise itself up, without the whole superincumbent strata of official society being sprung into the air. . . .
>
> The modern laborer . . . instead of rising with the progress of industry, sinks deeper and deeper below the existence of his own class. He becomes a pauper, and pauperism develops more rapidly than population and wealth. And here it becomes clear that the bourgeoisie is unfit any longer to be the ruling class in society, and to impose its conditions of existence upon society as an overriding law. It is unfit to rule, because it is incompetent to insure an existence to its slave within his slavery, because it cannot help letting him sink into such a state that it has to feed him, instead of being fed by him. Society can no longer live under this bourgeois; in other words, its existence is no longer compatible with society. . . . The development of modern industry therefore, cuts from under its feet the very foundation on which the bourgeoisie produces and appropriates products. What the bourgeoisie, therefore, produces above all, are its own grave-diggers. Its fall and the victory of the proletariat are equally inevitable.

The Bolsheviks and Planned Economy

What is the effect upon the productive forces of the overthrow of capitalist power, and the establishment of a working class government? Let us take the answer from the words of Engels, written in 1883, showing for how long have the leaders of the working class been studying the problem of social-economic planning:

> With the seizing of the means of production by society, production of commodities is done away with and, simultaneously, the mastery of the product over the producer. *Anarchy in social production is replaced by systematic, definite organization.* The struggle for individual existence disappears. Then for the first time, man, in a certain sense, is finally marked off from the rest of the animal kingdom and emerges from mere animal conditions of existence into really human ones. . . . Man's own social organization, hitherto confronting him as a necessity imposed by nature and history, now becomes the result of his own free action. . . . Only from that time will man himself, more and more consciously, make his own history—only from that time will the social causes set in movement by him have in the main and in a constantly growing measure, the results intended by him. It is the ascent of man from the kingdom of necessity to the kingdom of freedom. (*Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*).

Shortly after Russian Czarism had been overthrown, and while the working class was preparing to take political power in its own hands, Lenin already indicated the road toward a planned economy which would be taken by the workers:

> The proletariat, when victorious, will act thus: It will set the economists, engineers, agricultural experts and so on to work out a "plan" *under the control* of the workers' organizations, to test it, to seek means of saving labor by means of centralism, and of securing the most simple cheap, convenient, general control. We shall pay the economists, statisticians, technicians, good money, but—but we shall not give them anything to eat unless they carry out this work honestly and entirely *in the interests of the workers.*
>
> We are in favor of centralism and of a "plan," but it must be the centralism and the plan of the *proletarian state,*—the proletarian regulation of production and distribution in the interest of the poor, the laboring, the exploited, *against* the exploiters. (Lenin, *Toward the Seizure of Power,* Book II, p. 40.)

As soon as the Bolsheviks had secured political power, they turned to planned economy as their major interest. In the words of Lenin, uttered at the moment of the end of the civil war:

> At the present time we are exercising our main influence on the international revolution by our economic policy. . . . The struggle on this field is now being waged on a world scale. If we solve this problem, then we shall have won on an international scale for certain and finally. That is why questions of economic construction assume absolutely exceptional significance for us. On this front we must win victory, by slow, gradual—it cannot be fast—but steadily increasing progress.

Lenin's policy was continued and developed under the leadership of Stalin. It came to its great victory in the first Five Year Plan, which covered approximately the first period of the world crisis in the capitalist lands. At a moment when the economically most advanced countries were falling into chaos, the Bolsheviks adopted a plan designed to transform their country, backward and in some respects medieval economically, into a country of the most advanced technique — to accomplish the task set by Lenin, to "overtake the advanced countries and surpass them also economically." While "plans" were crashing in all capitalist countries, and being changed every few months only to crash again, the Bolshevik plan was *fulfilled nine months ahead of schedule.* Stalin was able to report:

> We have done more than we expected. . . . While the index number of the volume of industrial production in the U.S.S.R., at the end of 1932, *rose* to 334, taking the pre-war output at 100; the index number of the volume of industrial output in the U. S. A. *dropped* in the same period to 84, that of England to 75, that of Germany to 62. While the index number of the volume of industrial output in the U.S.S.R. at the end of 1932 rose to 219, taking 1928 at 100, the index number of the volume of industrial output in the U. S. A. during the same period *dropped* to 56, that in England to 80, Germany to 55, Poland to 54.
>
> What do these figures show if not that the capitalist system of industry has not stood the test in contest with the Soviet system, that the Soviet system has all the advantages over the capitalist system.

It is clear that if a social-economic plan is to be discussed at all, this immediately takes us beyond the boundaries of capitalism. But it is still necessary to estimate those theories which, apparently, accept this fundamental truth, and which yet reject the revolutionary road to a planned society. For example, the theory of George Soule, which is essentially that of the international Social Democratic parties, holds that the development of engineering, of rationalization, the Taylor system, etc., will automatically carry over capitalism, step by step, to a socialist basis. This theory ignores the central fact, that the faster production and productivity increase, so much deeper becomes the crisis of capitalism, the more inextricable its contradictions. Crisis arises, not from lack of productivity, but from its excess above what can be contained within the relations of capitalist property. Any policy which leaves intact capitalist property, maintains thereby the cause of inevitable crisis.

Technocracy, a peculiar American product in social thought, rejects in words both capitalism and communism. But its criticism of capitalism is directed toward surface questions, problems of distribution, not of production. It finds all the evils of capitalism in "the price system," and thinks that a different superstructure can be built without touching the foundation of private property and production for profit. It further supplements the old fetishism of commodities with a new fetishism of mechanical energy, which it envisions as displacing the working class as the moving force in production. Its peculiar barrenness in the field of practical policy is only the necessary consequence of cutting itself off from the source of all life, the working class, the producers. Technocracy contributes nothing toward a solution of the problem of a planned society, it only exhibits another example of decay of capitalism and capitalist thought.

Upton Sinclair, with his EPIC plan, envisages the growth of a self-contained use economy within the general limitations of a profit economy, by putting the unemployed to work producing a subsistence for themselves. The same thought, less developed, is contained in the Roosevelt project for subsistence farming. But even less than it was possible for a

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slave economy and modern capitalist economy to live side by side, is it now possible for a use-economy to grow up within the decayed profit system.

Such proposals, in practice, inevitably degenerate into schemes for lifting the burdens of unemployment relief off of the profits of the capitalists, by throwing the surplus population (the unemployed) back several centuries into pre-capitalist economic forms, into a sort of serfdom, of forced labor, as an auxiliary, unpaid, of profit production. It is an anticipation of fascist economic policy.

We have insisted upon the establishment of a working-class government, as the essential pre-condition to a planned economy. Does this mean, however, as many think, that we exclude other classes from participation in such socialist economy, or from the tasks of its construction? Not at all. On the contrary, the Communist program from its first enunciation has foreseen the enormous importance of allies of the working class, first of all the impoverished farmers (and oppressed colonial peoples) and second, sections of the middle classes and even of the ruling class, which desert their class and go over to the revolutionary working class. In the *Communist Manifesto,* of 1848, it is stated on this question:

> Entire sections of the ruling class are, by the advance of industry, precipitated into the proletariat, or are at least threatened in their conditions of existence. These also supply the proletariat with fresh elements of enlightenment and progress.
>
> The process of dissolution going on within the ruling class . . . assumes such a violent, glaring character that a small section of the ruling class cuts itself adrift and joins the revolutionary class, the class that holds the future in its hands . . . and in particular, a portion of the bourgeois ideologists, who have raised themselves to the level of comprehending theoretically the historical movement as a whole.

Lenin also, while emphasizing the leading role of the working class, stressed the need of winning the middle class:

> In order to bring socialism into being, and afterwards to maintain it, the proletariat has a twofold task to perform. It must, by its heroism in the revolutionary fight against capitalism, carry with it the whole mass of the working and exploited people, organize them, and lead them to the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the complete destruction of every kind of resistance. It must also lead the entire body of workers, as well as all the petit bourgeois strata of society, in breaking the ground for the economic reconstruction of society, while it creates a new bond of social union, a new discipline of labor, a new organization of work, which will avail itself of the latest discoveries of science and of the advantages of capitalist technique. In this way the masses of conscious workers, welded closely together, will carry through the work of socialist production on a large scale. (Lenin, *The Great Initiative,* pp. 18-19.)

Today, these words apply with special force to the technicians, the scientists, the engineers, the economists, etc. In these groups we also witness the greatest devastation from the crisis, the proportion of unemployment being higher than in any category of workers except perhaps in the building trades. These highly skilled technicians see the capitalist system discarding them and their skill as superfluous; they see their capacities being destroyed through non-use over many years. It is typical of this condition, to take a current local example, that engineers who designed and constructed the Eighth Avenue Subway are today working in the change-booths, exchanging nickels for dimes and quarters, for a wage of about twenty dollars for a sixty- to seventy-hour week, and glad to get the job.

On the other hand, our unemployed technicians, or those unproductively employed on a charity basis, have constantly before their eyes the spectacle of gigantic construction going on in the Soviet Union, with a largely new, relatively unskilled, cadre of technicians, who perform miracles because the chains of private property have been moved from their hands. It is impossible for our American technicians not to dream about what marvels they could accomplish in the United States, if they were simply called upon to bring into full exercise all the productive forces already existing without regard to profit and private-property considerations.

There is not the slightest reason why our technicians should not continue to dream about this subject. Certainly, they have little else to occupy their minds of a constructive character. This should even be encouraged, all the more since a growing mass of workers already looking upon themselves as representing the future masters of society, are looking about for the initial cadres to help in the coming tasks of transforming American economy on a planned socialist basis.

What could be better than to organize our technicians, the best that can be found (and the very best are available), for the purpose of giving a scientific and detailed answer to the question, what could be done with the full employment of all workers and technicians, in the fullest possible exploitation of existing machinery and natural resources, with all capitalist limitations removed, toward raising the standards of life of the whole population at a progressively accelerated rate.

Certainly there would be a tremendous value in such a Workers' and Technicians' Plan for the United States, without regard to any differences of opinion that may exist among us on the questions as to how eventually such a plan will be brought into successful operation. Speaking for the revolutionary workers, I would issue this challenge to the technicians: Answer these questions for us, and we, the workers, will find the answer as to how to carry out this plan in life.

Two Poems

MECHANISM

What price
This mechanism, this device
Of man's immaculate inventiveness?
What fee
This splendid rhythmic symmetry,
This sinewed miracle that hands have wrought
Out of imagining, this mighty thought
To which all human actions acquiesce!

Challenge the pistons in their impetus,
Question the turbines in their unison;
Certain, immediate, monotonous,
They chant the same long answer as they run:
"You have endowed us with your gifts of dower;
Your will is our will, and that will is power!"

This dream
Made actual of steel and steam,
Conceived of human strength and laws of nature—
This wheel
Has yet new wonders to reveal,
New beauty unsuspected and unsought,
New alchemy and magic to be caught
By wiser men with minds of greater stature!
We are the pistons in their impetus,
We are the turbines in their unison;
Constant, obedient, oblivious,
We function in them and our will is done:
This is our heritage, this is our dower—
We are this mechanism! We are this power!

CARL JOHN BOSTELMANN.

FOR MY MOTHER

(Who was a Social Democrat in the nineties, and might be a radical now, only sort of hopes the present system will last her day, but is planning to live twenty years longer.)

What's this from you, who drink and smoke and bet
(The favorites to show), hold down a job
At—is it sixty-five?—and never yet
Gave way an inch to any canting mob?
Let tourists on the sinking steamer sit
Fatuous in the deck-chairs: sure, it's rough,
Maybe the life-boats will careen a bit,
But don't you pride yourself on being tough?

If on your Western acre, evil wholly
Seems to engulf the disappearing light
As the descending darkness gathers slowly,
Forget it. Leftward—look!—the land is bright.

"This Profit System still might make it, if—"
Mother, I think you're betting on a stiff.

ROLFE HUMPHRIES.

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El Gran Chaco

HAROLD WARD

PACIFISTS, LIBERALS and humanitarians have wept bitterly over the horrors of the Chaco War between Bolivia and Paraguay, now in its third year and no reasonable end in sight. Fought in a "Green Hell" of jungle and swamp by armies of increasingly mutinous and embittered natives equipped with the latest and most perfect *matériel* (supplied in cool defiance on an "arms embargo" officially ratified by 27 nations and approved by 7 others) and under the command of a miscellaneous assortment of German, French and White Russian generals, this Latin-American war exposes the utter futility of struggling against militarism without having *first* thoroughly *understood*—and systematically undermined—its economic basis as expressed in competitive markets, national rivalries and imperialist aggression.

What is the economic background of the Chaco conflict? First, and superficially, Bolivia's need of an outlet to the sea, obtainable (since the failure of the Tacna-Arica negotiations with Peru) only via the Paraguay-Parana river-system, which connects with the Atlantic Ocean at Buenos Ayres. Independent Bolivian navigation of this waterway can only be assured through control of the entire Gran Chaco area, the boundaries of which have been in dispute since 1879. Increasing industrial development and commercial exploitation (largely through foreign capital) plus continual political tension led to Bolivia's advancing her frontier patrols further and further into the Chaco, while Paraguay countered by slowly moving northwards in order to consolidate her own squatter claims. The border patrols clashed in June, 1932—and the war was on. Curiously enough, Bolivia has never formally declared war, and Paraguay did so only in May of 1933, in justification of her attempt to recapture Fort Boqueron.

Of Bolivia's exports 96 percent is in minerals, of which tin is by far the most important. With the exception of the British-controlled Federated Malay States Bolivia exports more tin than any other country in the world—and of this amount (averaging from 20,000 to 30,000 tons a year) virtually all goes to England for the expensive—and profitable—refining process. Right here is one of the reasons why British interests would prefer to have Paraguay victorious in the Chaco War, for if Bolivia obtained a hold on the Chaco, she would not only get cheaper transportation to American and other markets but would be able to encourage development of the Standard Oil holdings in that region, thus permitting a more active industrial development through utilization of the one dependable source of fuel and power she has (her coal deposits are negligible).

The tin industry of Bolivia is securely in the hands of the great Simon Patiño Mines and Enterprises, a corporation organized under the laws of the State of Delaware in 1924, with a present capitalization of $50,000,000. Patiño, who obtained his start by accepting a bad mortgage on a property which turned out to be one of the richest tin-bearing deposits in the world, also controls General Tin Industries, which subsidiary purchased, in 1929, the William Harvey company of Liverpool. The Harvey company is at the receiving end for all the Patiño ore sent to England for refining—which further explains why British capital is so unwilling to allow the United States, or any other country (including Bolivia herself) to chisel in on the tin racket, especially at present, with war needs for this metal increasing so rapidly.

Other tin mining interests in Bolivia include the Caracoles Tin Co., originally formed in 1922 by the Guggenheims, today a $40,000,000 concern operated by a Swiss-American group which also owns the British Aramayo Francke Mines; the Fabulosa Mines, officially a Bolivian group but actually controlled from London by the Bolivian and General Tin Trust; Duncan, Fox & Co., Philipp Bros. and Berenguela Tin Mines, Ltd., all British, but with relatively slight production.

Of other minerals we may mention tungsten, of which in 1929 Bolivia was the world's second ranking producer (concentrates). Two-thirds of this production came from the American firm of Easley and Inslee, and most of the remainder from Patiño holdings. Zinc occurs in various deposits whose working could be made profitable if the fuel and transportation problem could be solved. This, again, brings us to oil—and the Chaco.

Several years ago the Standard Oil Company of Bolivia (controlled by the Standard of New Jersey) effected an agreement with the Bolivian government under the terms of which it was to commence active production by 1930. A number of wells were brought in throughout an area of about 4,000 square miles and it is reported that a monthly production of 400,000 gallons is sold cheaply to the Bolivian armies. Further development has been hindered by the usual lack of transportation—and by the Chaco dispute. The Standard Oil holdings are just across the western border of the Chaco, a thirty-mile stretch of which was conceded by the Bolivian government for the construction of a pipe-line. As it is precisely this territory which is being turned into a shamble by the war, Standard Oil and its investors are—for the moment—out of luck and very much annoyed.

American investments in Bolivia come to well over $100,000,000, concentrated mostly in oil and tin. In 1922 United States bankers (Morgan, National City, Dillon Read, Equitable Trust and others) obtained a mortgage on Bolivia's national bank, on her customs revenue, etc., thereby getting a strangle hold on the country's finances—and opening the way to the sale of armaments and munitions, in competition with Vickers and a horde of other traders in sudden death. A $23,000,000 loan arranged six years ago between Wall Street and Bolivia was intended almost entirely for the purchase of such material, despite the official ban of the State Department. So we see that, long before the Chaco War broke on a horrified world, two countries whose respective populations are about 90 percent native and "mestizo" (mixed) stock were grimly preparing for a conflict whose real roots were—and are—anywhere but in the supposed "patriotism" of the inhabitants. According to the League of Nations (whose principal job seems to be finding out things nobody can do anything about), up to September, 1932, Bolivia and Paraguay had purchased $20,000,000 worth of munitions from England and the United States.

To conclude with an interesting sidelight on the purely military aspects of this struggle for economic dominance of South America:

The current issue of Army Ordinance, official journal of the munitions interests (masquerading under the title "Army Ordnance Association") contains an article entitled "Tanks in the Gran Chaco; their use under conditions of jungle warfare." The author is Robert J. Icks, a First Lieutenant of the Infantry (Tanks) Reserve, U. S. Army. After describing the fever-stricken character of the Chaco region and inconceivably difficult conditions under which the war is prosecuted, Lieutenant Icks, with the candor of an honest military observer, writes:

"The struggle is a singularly pitiless and horrible one. The fighting has been in the bush, in a trying climate, and far from centers of population. Medical service is inadequate. Behind the lines, both countries are becoming impoverished in men and resources, universities are closed, disease has been brought back to civilian regions where such malady was previously unknown. It is difficult to realize the magnitude and ferocity of the struggle, now in its third year. . . . In comparison with the size of the countries and the armies [the ratio of casualties] is far greater than in the World War. . . ."

Nevertheless, it seems that the Bolivians have one advantage over the Paraguayans—they alone use tanks "of the Carden Loyd and the Vickers 6-ton varieties." As communication by radio is impossible under the conditions, "the tanks, instead, use sirens": to little purpose, it seems, for the men inside usually collapse from temperatures reaching as high as 95 deg. F.

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Correspondence

National Congress for H. R. 7598

To The New Masses:

Mass demonstrations throughout the country are being planned on behalf of the Workers' Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill by the committee sponsoring the National Congress on Unemployment and Social Insurance which is to be held in Washington, D. C., on Jan. 5, 6 and 7. Those demonstrations will take place simultaneously with the presentation of the demand for the bill before the U. S. Congress, on Jan. 7.

Response to the Congress is widespread. For instance, Richmond, Va., will send twelve delegates; Des Moines, Ia., twenty-five; Cleveland, O., 100; Worcester, Mass., ten. Among the trade unions which elected delegates last week are: International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, Local 48, Jackson, Calif.; Photo Engravers, No. 13, Cincinnati, O.; Bakery & Confectionery Workers 204, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Local 7 National Die Casting Workers' League, Batavia, N. Y.

The Civil Liberties Conference on the New Deal which recently met in Washington, D. C., gave its endorsement to the National Congress.

A large delegation of Negro workers from Southern states will attend the National Congress. Already a large number of tobacco, steel and longshore workers have been elected as delegates.

Owing to the extreme poverty of these workers and their inability to raise funds, however, every help must be extended to make it possible for them to reach Washington.

The National Sponsoring Committee appeals to all those who believe in the work that the Congress is trying to accomplish to give their approval concrete form by a donation. Every penny will count. No sum is too high and no sum is too low. All funds should be sent to the National Sponsoring Committee, Room 624, 799 Broadway, New York.

T. Arnold Hill,
Treasurer.

Defense of the Utopians

To The New Masses:

Only a complete failure to understand the essential aims of the Utopian Society permits the use of the title employed by Mr. Newhouse in his article in the current issue (December 18th) of The New Masses. I hope that this lack of understanding was not deliberate, because the Utopians are fighting exactly the same evils of modern economic life as the Communists, although by different methods. No "entrepreneur" of the capitalistic class, no matter how skillful he might be, no matter what financial contributions he might be authorized to make, could possibly develop the Utopians into an army of Fascisti, either now or in the future. Our whole basic philosophy is absolutely opposed to Fascism in any form; we recognize it, just as do the Communists, as the last line of defense of the capitalists. The complete abolition of the present profit system, together with its attendant evils of Capitalism and Poverty, must precede any intelligent form of government. Under no circumstances will Utopians lift one finger to help Capitalism in any form. Like the Republican Party in this country it is dying today. In sheer desperation to maintain its supremacy, it will grab at any straw, but its demise is certain,—and we will be the first to greet the event with loud cheers. The only way that Capitalism has succeeded in surviving the past two years has been by constant injections of morphine by Dr. Roosevelt, in the form of financial assistance to the unemployed.

Mr. Newhouse infers that Utopian ideology of economic change is hazy, and its technique flexible. The variations of which he speaks are either ridiculously exaggerated or fundamentally immaterial. The Utopians make no secret of their aim, the abolition of the profit system, and the substitution of a sane socialized ownership, with careful governmental planning so that the vast resources and productive capacity of this nation may be made easily available to every individual citizen. The economy of abundance today makes the survival of the profit system as illogical as the use of candles after electricity was invented—or to speak more exactly after electricity as a force had been harnessed and made available for use as light.

Naturally, this necessitates a complete change: it predicates the elimination of the banker as a controlling factor, and the elimination of money (as we know it today) as a medium of exchange. Of course there will be some sort of purchasing certificates, issued *annually* by the government to every adult citizen in direct ratio to the production of goods for that year, such certificates to become void if unused before the expiration of the annual period. This plan would automatically abolish the present evils of hoarding, debt and interest payments.

The Utopian Society stands the same chance of finding itself, a year from today, "where it was a year ago, in the back parlors of an investment broker," as the Communist Party has of disappearing from the American scene. Both events are possible, but distinctly improbable. It is a pity that any antagonism whatsoever should exist between us. The artificial barrier painstakingly erected by the Communist writers and leaders is a figment of the imagination, and will disappear as quickly as ice melts in a hot sun as soon as we really understand one another.

The comparison between the initiation ceremonies of the Utopian Society and those of the Elk, the Moose, and the Odd Fellow is one of which we are in no way ashamed. It would be fairer to compare our ritual procedure with the very secretive and solemn rites associated with membership in the higher degrees of Masonry,—but let's not quibble over non-essentials. The typical middle-class American is notorious in his fondness for secret societies: why deprecate it?

William W. Sanders.

Reply by Edward Newhouse

To The New Masses:

1. Mr. Sanders has not shown how the "different methods" whereby the Utopians hope to "abolish the profit system" have a chance of succeeding. He has still not shown that the bankers will allow themselves to be "eliminated as a controlling factor" without offering resistance in the form of bayonets and poison gas. The working class, organized for revolutionary action, is the decisive factor in breaking through such resistance. The lower middle class can be of effective aid in the fight. The Utopians assert that their appeal is to all classes but the New Masses article last week showed clearly that their membership is drawn almost exclusively from the middle class and Mr. Sanders' last sentence is a cue. The contemplated drastic changes in the economic structure can only be effected through seizure of the means of production and no middle class organization can hope to accomplish that by itself. The Utopians have announced that they will not fight on a class struggle basis and they have demonstrated their policies in the San Francisco General Strike when they failed even to issue a statement. "Under no circumstances will the Utopians lift one finger to help Capitalism in any form," writes Mr. Sanders. After their first year of existence they have yet to show any intention of lifting a finger to overthrow it.

2. Mr. Sanders resents the charge of "flexibility." But does not explain why Dunham Thorp, co-director of the Society's Eastern unit, was unwilling to release its California publications on the ground that "We have different plans for New York." Assume that the $10,000 difference in the annual incomes promised to Californians and New Yorkers is a typographical error. Aren't the Society's flag wavings and religious trappings more than "flexibility?" Aren't they unprincipled concessions to the very capitalism which the Utopians and Adolf Hitler so heartily denounce?

3. There is *not* the same chance of the Communist Party's "disappearing from the American scene" as there is of the Utopian Society finding itself where it was a year ago, in the back parlors of an investment broker and a few real estate, business and professional men. As the Communist Party grows in numbers and power, there will inevitably be further attempts made to outlaw it. For organizations sincerely interested in frustrating such attempts, the American League Against War and Fascism has proved itself a most effective instrument of struggle. I am certain it would be happy to receive the Utopian Society's offer to affiliate.

Edward Newhouse.

Newark's Famous Library

To The New Masses:

Upon visiting the Newark, N. J. library in order to read the latest issue of The Communist I discovered that the magazine was gone, with its listing. As far as I know The Communist had been on the shelves for years, and I inquired at one of the information desks why the magazine was discontinued. The young lady informed me, rather lamely, that the library administration removed it because it was not indexed on the current periodical list. Upon examining the Readers' Current Guide to Periodicals I found that most of the magazines on the shelves are not listed in this guide, notably the fascist American Review of Seward Collins, the Modern Monthly, the pro-fascist publication of the Columbia Casa Italiana and dozens of other reviews.

Incidentally The New Masses is not found on these shelves although many requests have been made for it.

We urge vigorous protest on your part and that of your readers against this openly pro-fascist policy, that the library administration be compelled to restore The Communist to the shelves and subscribe to The New Masses.

Newark Friend of New Masses.

Radio Censorship

To The New Masses:

I am now engaged in the preparation of a survey for the American Civil Liberties Union on the subject of radio censorship.

I would be very grateful to any of your readers who may know of actual instances of radio censorship, if they would communicate with me and let me have all the facts.

Minna F. Kassner.
1359 Broadway, New York City.

Spivak in the Pulpit

To The New Masses:

It was with a great deal of interest that I read the startling series of articles by Jack Spivak on the subject, *Plotting the American Pogroms* which ran in The New Masses during October and November. The articles are examples of fine, dependable journalism. Amazing though the disclosures were, the proofs adduced by Mr. Spivak were incontrovertible. New Masses deserves a great deal of credit for exposing the promoters of anti-semitic propaganda.

I have referred to these articles from time to time, both in my pulpit sermons and in my addresses before the Current Events Group.

Temple Emanu-El, David Lefkowitz.
Dallas, Tex.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

Another Authority on Marxism

MR. JOHN CHAMBERLAIN has returned to the subject of proletarian literature in his review of John Strachey's *Literature and Dialectical Materialism.* Very few of his comments are sound, and several are unfair. Since I want to devote myself this week to another authority on Marxism, I cannot discuss Chamberlain's misguided efforts to refute Strachey's analysis of Hemingway, MacLeish, *et al.* I must, however, comment on his response to my invitation to produce examples of my application of "mechanical, moralistic criteria." This is what he offers:

> When Robert Cantwell wrote *The Land of Plenty,* Mr. Hicks lamented that the novel did not contain a ringing assurance that the working class is bound to triumph. But Mr. Cantwell, at the time he was completing his novel, happened to be depressed at what he regarded as the sinister outcome of a number of strikes under the N.R.A. His depressed feeling, quite naturally, was reflected in his novel. And the value of the novel, from a radical's point of view, is that it is a key to a state of mind and a state of society. If Mr. Cantwell had faked the proletarian equivalent of a happy ending, he would have been misleading his readers. Mr. Hicks should not, I submit, have lectured Cantwell for failing to rally the morale of the troops.

What I said and all I said is:

> The book gives the reader the mental atmosphere of a factory as no other novel does that I have read, and it shows in its essentials the unconquerable militancy of the workers. In the second part of the book, especially at the very end, Cantwell relies too much on obliqueness, and the heroism of the embattled workers is a little obscured. As a result *The Land of Plenty* fails to sweep the reader along, as William Rollin's *The Shadow Before* does, to high resolve and a sense of ultimate triumph. There remains, however, a feeling that one has been in contact with people and with forces that cannot be ignored.

Now where is the lament and where is the lecture? Cantwell has himself admitted that the ending was confused. I merely pointed out that, if it had been clearer, the book would have said more effectively what he wanted to say.

Despite Dr. Harry Elmer Barnes' second plea for an era of good feeling, I still believe that it is our friends who need watching. Lewis Gannett dismissed Strachey's book as nonsense. John Chamberlain took it seriously and devoted his whole column to it. The comparison is, obviously, all in Chamberlain's favor. Yet Gannett's dismissal will do the book no particular harm, whereas Chamberlain's confused and misleading comments are bound to create misunderstanding and make the growth of proletarian literature more difficult.

Exactly the same comment has to be made about the two articles that the Saturday Review of Literature has published. Mencken's article was a disgraceful performance, and I still think Dr. Canby ought to be ashamed of having published so shoddy an essay. But Mencken so completely exposed himself that his article was almost as much of a boon to Communists as Herbert Hoover's *Challenge to Liberty* was to the Democrats. Louis Adamic, however, writing in the Saturday Review for December 1, comes forward as a sympathizer with militant labor and a friend to radical authors. His piece at least has elements of plausibility, and what I regard as its errors are all too likely to be accepted by the unwary.

Mr. Adamic's thesis is that "the overwhelming majority of the American working class does not read books and serious, purposeful magazines." This is his conclusion, "based on a year's study among hundreds of workers throughout the United States." He offers the statement as if it would startle his readers, especially the radicals. But we knew it all the time. Times are changing a good deal more rapidly than Mr. Adamic will admit, and I suspect that a different kind of sampling would have got different results, but circulation figures alone would be enough to show that the number of workers that read revolutionary novels is relatively small.

If what Adamic has to say is news to any proletarian novelists, I hope they will profit by it. But I am much less interested in his account of the reading habits of the average worker than I am in his generalizations on proletarian literature. For, despite the modest title, "What the Proletariat Reads," the essay not only offers a good deal of advice to authors but ventures into the field of theory.

The essay begins by summarizing Trotsky's familiar argument that proletarian culture is impossible, since under capitalism and the dictatorship alike the proletariat is too busy to produce an authentic art, and by the time leisure has been achieved a classless society will have been established. Unfortunately for Trotsky and Adamic, art has been flourishing for seventeen years in the Soviet Union. It is not a classless art, any more than the Soviet Union is a classless society; it is the art of the class in power, the proletariat. And even in capitalist countries a considerable body of art has developed that one cannot possibly call bourgeois and certainly is not classless. Mr. Adamic recognizes this in practice by discussing several examples in his essay.

Even a casual analysis of cultural processes will reveal the fallacy in Trotsky's assertions. During the period of capitalist decline, a growing number of proletarians realize that their economic interests are opposed to those of the bourgeosie, then that their political interests are opposed, and finally that their cultural interests are opposed. Bourgeois books do not portray life as they see it, do not deal with the problems that seem to them important, do not express their attitudes. Despite all the hardships of their class in a capitalist society, certain of them attempt to write about life in their own terms. They are joined by members of the middle class, usually the lower middle class, who realize that capitalism is doomed and that the future lies with the workers. These revolutionary intellectuals, identifying themselves, perhaps never completely but in important respects, with the proletariat, express essentially the same attitude as their proletarian allies. Together these two groups lay the foundation for a literature that is fundamentally different from that of the dominant class.

This point we have already reached in the United States. Russia, of course, is far ahead of us. Even in the period of greatest struggle against class enemies, Soviet writers were at work, and today, with the establishment of higher standards of living and the achievement of greater leisure, the Soviet Union is the scene of far greater cultural activity than can be found in any capitalist country. The authors of the USSR are not only given every opportunity to write; their books are sold in editions of hundreds of thousands, and are read and discussed by millions of workers. The culture of the Soviet Union rests, not on the whims of a leisured minority, but on the fundamental interests and ever-expanding desires of the creative masses. No culture in history has had so firm a foundation.

But culture in the USSR is still a class culture. The proletariat must remain militantly class-conscious so long as its enemies survive at home and abroad, and its literature reflects this class-consciousness. When the proletariat is the only class, it will cease to be conscious of itself as a class. The classless society will not be achieved by manifesto; it will be a slow and imperceptible growth. Literature will respond to every phase of this transition, and proletarian literature will gradually become the literature of a classless society. Proletarian culture will not last as long as bourgeois culture has lasted, but it is the only possible bridge between bourgeois and classless culture. It is bound to exist because it is the expression of a class that is, during a considerable period of time, conscious of itself as distinct from other classes. Moreover, it has a role to play in the creation of attitudes that are essential to the final evolution of a classless society.

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If this is true, it is meaningless for Adamic to say, "All proletarian literature is intended to be propaganda," for it is not propaganda in any sense that bourgeois literature is not. If the expression of a particular attitude towards the world is propaganda, then the term applies to all literature. The aim of the proletarian author is the aim of any author: he wants to write about representative persons and significant events in such a way as to bring out what he believes to be the truth about them.

Out of his vast misunderstanding of proletarian literature Mr. Adamic attempts to lay down a series of rules. There should be no individual villains, he says. Every Marxist knows, of course, that there are no villains, but he also knows that there are people who do villainous things, who are regarded as villains by their opponents, and who have to be treated as villains. Again, he says that the proletarian novel "must not be about the proletariat alone, as if it existed in a kind of semi-vacuum." I trust the critics will observe that this time it is a non-Marxist who is telling writers what they should write about—something Marxist critics don't do but are accused of doing. It may suit the purposes of the writer to deal with both the workers and the bosses or it may not. Halper was right in devoting so much attention to the bosses in *The Foundry,* and Jack Conroy, who was writing *The Disinherited* from the point of view of a particular worker, was right in including only as much of the bosses as that worker would see. Yet Larry Donovan does not exist in a vacuum.

All this suggests to me that Mr. Adamic is trying hard to make a case against proletarian literature and has raked together all the arguments he can borrow or invent. This impression is confirmed when I read, "Most of the proletarian writing so far, as I have said, has not been overburdened with truth. Much of it, with its lies and exaggerations, is downright counter-revolutionary in character." This is a serious charge and ought to be backed with a little evidence. The only specific case of misrepresentation Adamic mentions is in Catherine Brody's *Nobody Starves,* which is a sentimental, humanitarian novel with no suggestion of revolutionary understanding. Of course there are unconvincing portrayals of character and implausible descriptions of events in certain proletarian novels, but I am convinced that under-statement is more characteristic of revolutionary fiction than exaggeration. If Mr. Adamic wanted to object to certain passages, I—and, I am sure, the authors—would listen with interest even when we could not agree, but this indictment of most of proletarian literature as "lies" is unpleasantly reminiscent of the Mencken article.

The shrewdness of some people is extraordinary. Certain followers of Trotsky loudly proclaim that they are more revolutionary than the Communists. Yet The Nation and other liberal periodicals, which will not have a Communist as contributor and which are not in any sense sympathetic to revolution, constantly print the reviews and articles of the Trotskyites. Mr. Adamic is also deeply concerned about the revolution and worries because the proletarian authors tell counter-revolutionary lies. Yet the very unrevolutionary Dr. Canby—who also, it may be noted, admires Eastman's latest book — employs Adamic to write the Saturday Review's article on proletarian literature. And I must say that Adamic, pointing out that the whole idea of proletarian literature is stupid and conveying the impression that most proletarian writers are fools or rascals or both, didn't let Dr. Canby down.

GRANVILLE HICKS

A Hero of Our Time

THE REICHSTAG FIRE TRIAL (Second Brown Book of the Hitler Terror). With an introductory Chapter, by Georgi Dimitrov; a Foreword, by D. N. Pritt, K. C.; and an introduction on Murder in Hitler Germany, by Lion Feuchtwanger. With 21 illustrations from original sources. Published by John Lane, the Bodley Head, Ltd. Agent and distributor for the United States, A. Kertesz, 38 Union Square. $2.50. 362 pages.

Dimitrov, by Stella Blagoyeva. International Publishers. 75c. in paper binding. 125 pages.

JUST a year ago the greatest political trial in the history of Europe, if not of the world, was in full course before the Supreme Court of Leipzig, Germany.

Nazi leaders and their police agents repeatedly had announced the possession of positive proof that the burning of the Reichstag a month after Hitler received the chancellorship, had been part of an international Communist plot. They brought in their stool pigeons and coached witnesses. But the frame-up swayed and crumbled. A human upheaval stood before the bar of justice, dominating the courtroom like a colossus, a "foreign agitator," one of three refugee Bulgarians arrested as foreign accomplices of Ernst Torgler, the gallant German defendant, and the tool, Van der Lubbe.

By the time the trial had finished, this man Dimitrov, called "a criminal on a large scale," had safely shown that the "criminal" applied to his captors and accusers, but that he was "large scale" in every other sense.

The story of the trial is nothing less than an epic—the manacled Dimitrov coming off the victor over the blond beast Goering, and the swarthy jawbone of an ass, Dr. Goebbels. While outside all over the world, perceptible and almost audible even through the dense wall of censorship around the courtroom, the protest and indignation of masses gathered and grew.

Dimitrov and his companions have acknowledged that one of the most powerful allies of their defense was a book—*The Brown Book of the Hitler Terror.* This book helped make accusers of the accused. It throws merciless light on the absurd discrepancies of the prosecution's case.

A successor to this book is very soon to appear in this country, prepared by the same capable, informed, and anonymous workers affiliated with the World Committee for the Relief of the Victims of German Fascism. Published in England under the name *The Reichstag Fire Trial,* and in a German version under the still more dramatic title of *Dimitrov versus Goering,* the book is an absorbing and abundant, if not exhaustive, record of the case, its overtones echo all over the world.

An appendix on *Murder in Hitler Germany,* with an introduction by Lion Feuchtwanger, continues the fearful record of bestiality contained in the first *Brown Book.* No less than the first, the second *Brown Book* is necessary for an understanding of the practices of fascist repression, and will show the reader why, after the colossal fiasco of the Reichstag fire trial, the Hitler regime saw itself obliged to discard the last mask of justice and civil safeguards, and introduce the present "People's Courts," the secret sentencing-machines which keep the axmen busy and their blocks drenched with the blood of Germany's best—the anti-fascist workers and leaders of workers.

Dimitrov's special introductory chapter is a splendid document. He pays high tribute to the courage of German workers, the solidarity of the revolutionary workers throughout the world, and dismisses his own part in the trial victory with a few words. Every detail of Dimitrov's personal life and political activity proves him able to write in complete sincerity:

> . . . I have often been asked whether, while the trial was going on, I believed we should ultimately be set free. I must confess I never considered the matter in this way at all. I was and still am deeply convinced that the cause for which I have fought all my life and for which I am ever fighting, will triumph in the end. It was this conviction, the fruit of deep research into the events of history, armed with the weapon of Marxist-Leninist dialectic, which gave me strength and courage in my struggle. My determination and resolution, however and wherever I was situated, to do my utmost to bring forward the historically inevitable triumph of the socialist revolution, thrust into the background as far as I was concerned, any thoughts of the eventual outcome of the trial.

Dimitrov's previous life, which alone can account for his historic triumph at Leipzig, is traced in a book by Stella Blagoyeva, herself a Bulgarian Communist leader. Blagoyeva writes as a Communist. She makes only passing references to his personal life, to the inspiring comradeship between him and the fellow revolutionist, his wife. What she deals with is his development as a revolutionary, a Communist leader. And it is best that his life be

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presented in this way, for so it is that his career can best be understood. The second half of the book, concluding with Dimitrov's own speech, is largely in Dimitrov's own words. Since Dimitrov, like other Communist leaders, is a master of keen and vigorous expression, it becomes excellent literature.

The natural use of dialectic, a truly powerful weapon in the hands of one who comprehends it, is strikingly illustrated by the impromptu speech of Dimitrov.

There are versions of this remarkable speech in both of the books here reviewed. Still a third version is contained in the Daily Worker pamphlet *Dimitrov Accuses* (with an introduction by William Patterson, secretary of the International Labor Defense, 3c.). No reader in our time can afford to miss this extraordinary document.

From these records of Dimitrov and his trial will come fresh courage and determination for the next defense struggle—to save Ernst Thaelmann from the People's Court and the Hitler headsman.

As Romain Rolland has said, "Thaelmann must be won like a battle."

The victory of Dimitrov is a classic source of the strategy which alone can win that battle.

ARTHUR HELLER.

The Dividends of War

ZAHAROFF—HIGH PRIEST OF WAR, by Guiles Davenport. Lothrop. $3.

> Whatever happens, we have got
> The Maxim gun, and they have not.

DURING the munitions inquiry, testimony was given that Sir Basil Zaharoff was receiving commissions from the Electric Boat Company of Connecticut, which, with Vickers, had divided up the submarine market of the world. The Associated Press called Zaharoff, as usual, the "European man of mystery." Guiles Davenport, an American journalist who has been reported forced to leave Europe because of the disclosures in his book, has given the closest estimate possible of this master of war, who has had a share in every international conflict, and, it seems, in every boundary skirmish provoking war, since his entrance into the munitions industry in 1877.

Zaharoff's career before 1877 is the mystery and he has deliberately left it unsolved. Nevertheless in each of the three stories of his youth, some details correspond. Is he an Anatolian Greek, pushing toward a huge and egocentric vision of an Ionian Empire, finally lost in the struggle between Venizelos and Constantine? —an Odessa Jew, imprisoned as a slacker?—or that Bishop Anthony of the Greek Orthodox Church who stole a magnificent emerald to give to the Czarina, and is reported dead? He has been identified as all of these, and proved none. It is said that he has at least two doubles; in 1932, when he was almost certainly visiting Hoover at the White House on a concealed mission (he has never been consulted except for one reason), the yacht Corsair, on which he came, was not booked out, and foreign correspondents reported him in Paris and London simultaneously.

Whatever his background, there were surely factors in it to lead him to plan a world empire founded on war, built on the decay of nations, and nourished on disaster. As an obscure twenty-five-a-week salesman for Nordenfeldt & Co., he began, in 1877, to sell guns to the Greeks, and, on the side, to stimulate war talk in the press and jingoism in the streets and committee-rooms. He sold the first submarine to his reputed fatherland, Greece, and while it was busy with self-congratulation, contracted with the enemy, Turkey, for the next two. When Maxim toured Europe with his new gun, he was continually shadowed and tracked, and ended his progress of surprises by finding himself a partner in the Nordenfeldt firm. Shortly afterward, Nordenfeldt was bought out, leaving Zaharoff in control. It was 1900, and Zaharoff was already high in this most international of industries, and beginning to realize its possibilities. Ever since guns, there had been gun-runners; but these men were their own philosophers, and were seeing the chances of a business that recognized no countries, no creeds, and were willing to sell death to anybody who had the price. The mergers were beginning to raise Krupp in Germany, Putiloff in Russia, Skoda in Austria, Schneider in France, and Zaharoff was securing his foothold in all of them. Conflicts were flaring between a dozen countries, and Zaharoff was always early, coming in with guns, coming out with profits.

From the turn of the century until the World War, Zaharoff perfected his system. He was a controlling figure in Vickers, Ltd.; he was making friends with a young Welsh lawyer named David Lloyd George; he was not backward about making political contacts (in 1915 a good portion of both Houses still held munitions shares); he was surrounding himself with tentacles of influence which made it possible for his organization to function in well-oiled privacy, and for his name never to be used. Money slipped to Serbia could provoke "border incidents" any time he liked; the Balkans were an eternal market for weapons. Firms were formed whose boards, like that of the Harvey United Steel Company, included two Germans, one being Krupp himself, five English, with Alfred Vickers at their head, three French, among them a representative of Schneider-Creuzot, and an Italian; the Bethlehem Steel Company held four thousand shares. The Russo-Japanese War gave Zaharoff double profits. He had eliminated all competition by being prime factor in all munitions firms, absorbing, combining, buying out. He had factories in Canada, Spain, Italy, Japan, and every Balkan state. He was Chairman of Vickers in France. He owned, through agents, enough of the French press to insure a trustworthy propaganda bureau for himself. He was not only a French citizen but a Commander of the Legion of Honor. Every shot fired was registered in his accounts.

The World War was the flower of his system, says Davenport. The World War, and, later, the war between Greece and Kemal Pasha, and smaller imperialist wars throughout the world, in Morocco, in Upper Silesia, in South and Central America. Open power was never his, although he might have arranged for his election to the Greek presidency. He chose, instead, the insidious methods of the profiteer, the Thyssen-role, playing a lone hand against the people, maneuvering against armies, against mass effort to defeat

The DECLINE of AMERICAN CAPITALISM

BY LEWIS COREY

AUTHOR OF "THE HOUSE OF MORGAN"

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war, out-Machiavelli-ing them all, feeding on decadence, and falling with it. When Kemal Pasha was recognized by the Soviet Union and France, Zaharoff's dream of an Ionian empire went down. He married his Spanish duchess, and retired to his hidden powers, and to Monte Carlo, which he owns.

Davenport's interpretation of his life is misleading in its emphasis on careerism, in its over-romanticism of this shadow over the world. With more effort, Davenport might have pointed out how Zaharoff has lived on the break-down of imperialism and built his fortune on the decline of other individual powers. The book centers its analysis on the will to power. It chalks in for the reader the bulk of a tremendous archtype of single rule, crafty, ruthless, certain in strength. Read it for the inside of the international munitions industry based on Zaharoff, whose holdings in oil and steel and cartels in all the ancillary industries are among the few sound securities left to big business, and for the irony of its facts. But any reader at all familiar with the situation which produces warlords will regret that Guiles Davenport has not seen clearly enough to interpret his man through them. He has written in *Zaharoff* a record of the history of Europe interpreted through the real rulers, the individuals who control industries. The method does not answer the question why modern society produces Zaharoffs. Of the thousands killed in many countries as sacrifice in imperialist war, of the competition for markets which produces such wars, of the masses who face the Zaharoffs, no mention is made. This leaves the book barren of everything except a set of fascinating and suggestive facts, little-known, and easily put in line in the history of the world class struggle of the last century.

MURIEL RUKEYSER.

Master and Pupil

ELEVEN NEW CANTOS, by Ezra Pound. Farrar and Rinehart. $1.50.
A TEARLESS GLASS. Poems and a Preface by Louis Grudin. $2.50.

EZRA POUND considers himself a revolutionary.

In his vitriolic, satiric cantos, he attacks the munitions makers, the profiteers, Mr. Morgan, despotism, war, democracy, and bad poetry, etc. In other words, he is dissatisfied with a number of things in the present world and he is using his pen against them, and especially against the capitalist credit structure in defense of the Douglas Social-Credit Plan.

In England, the cohorts of Douglas are followers of a potentially fascist movement. Pound himself admires Mussolini, has faith in that dictator's corporative state, and defends Italian Fascism. In a letter to an American newspaper, he is aware that "the economics of C. H. Douglas . . . is not incompatible with Fascism." Pound blindly persists in stating that Fascism in Italy has its original features and is unlike Fascism in Germany or elsewhere.

Pound has complained that his status as a revolutionary has been maligned by the comrades in America. In fact, he is more revolutionary than they are. Pound does not seem to understand why his role as a politico-revolutionary meets with their disfavor. But they cannot, if he can, reconcile his claim as a revolutionary with his defense of a regime which is the last outpost of reaction in society and in the arts and bases itself upon the most ruthless suppressions of revolutionary groups, labor organizations, and free-thinking intellectuals.

As a commentator upon the social scene, Pound is a muddled economist, conscious of where the evil lies but not knowing how to go about eradicating it. As a poet he is in command of his craft and in Canto XXXVI he has written a finely executed and beautiful poem of love.

Ezra Pound may continue to insist upon his status as a revolutionary. If he does so he will have to prove it with something more substantial than this offering. He will have to use his art as a weapon not only against certain aspects of capitalism but also against its dictatorial counterpart, Fascism, and in behalf of the working-class and its struggle for freedom. As a poet, his ideas will have to become both more revolutionary and more communicative in order to convey his message effectively to a larger audience.

Louis Grudin is a former disciple of Ezra Pound, and the artistic faults of the master are the flaws of the pupil. It is interesting to observe how the former's literary theories have influenced Grudin to such an extent that the latter has lost his own poetic sensibilities. His poems are marked by an artificial sense of words and by recondite abstractions.

Louis Grudin's *Preface* is much more distinguished, provocative, and worth reading. He asserts that although Marxian critics are right in claiming a writer's experience is important in considering an artist's work, because it furnishes the social co-ordinates of that work, the writer is independent of the field of experience and a work of art is its own measure of judgment. He mistakenly interprets the Marxian point of view as one which considers the artist the mechanical subject of his environment. It is a Marxian axiom, and a common-sense observation, that there is a dialectical interplay between subject and object.

STEVE FOSTER.

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Brief Review

SUZY, by Herbert Gorman. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

Susan Dillworthy, an American vaudeville dancer stranded in London, flees to Paris when the man with whom she is living is shot by a German spy. Here she becomes progressively the mistress of a Socialist named Mahuc, the wife of Charles d'Eze, who is the son of a baron, and the wife of Yves de Miraumont. She witnesses the assassination of Jaures, is helpful in trapping Mata Hari, and survives the World War, but her development from a thoughtless, sensual, complacent creature to a stoic who "saw the world for what it was and made the best of it" is due more to the author's arbitrary will than to her own experiences. The book is a curious melange of superficial and contradictory history, earnest fiction, and Mata Hari fable. It is important only as it throws light on the egotistic, defeatist,

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quite incredible "wisdom" of one who has been regarded as a leading intellectual.

A SOUTHERN WELCOME, A Report by John Howard Lawson. 10c.

When a delegation sponsored by the National Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners went South to investigate the treatment of Angelo Herndon and the Scottsboro boys and the state of civil rights in Georgia and Alabama, it received the sort of southern welcome that has come to characterize the hospitality of the southern ruling class. In Atlanta, an apoplectic and possibly psychopathic Assistant Solicitor-General fulminated against Mr. Lawson and his companions as "liberals" and "criminals" and stormed out of his office. In Birmingham, Mr. Lawson was arrested for a dispatch to The Daily Worker, on a trumped-up charge of "criminal libel." Mr. Lawson's report points out the progressive growth of Fascism with the suppression of cultural and political activity and the increasing terrorization of the workers, and the fomenting of race hatred in face of the rising militancy and solidarity of the Negro and white workers of the South. One of the primary merits of this pamphlet is its fluent writing.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MAN RAY 1920 PARIS 1934. Random House. $10.

This expensively printed and bound volume of photographs is a pathetic effort of another expatriate to embalm his decaying "art" and neurotic manifestos about life, art, and revolution. It represents ten years of photography by Man Ray. And what has he got to show for it: an enlarged close up of an eye (out of focus), a couple of photographic imitations of one of Picasso's neo-classic periods, several banal commercial interiors, a sentimental formal landscape, a study in texture, some parisian nudes with a psychoanalytic angle, a couple of portraits that are not even good Broadway, a fashion photograph, a portrait of a fairy, and a group of abstractions that were dead and out of date when they were published in Transition in 1928.

The photographs (like the binding and printing) are pretentious, empty, and meaningless. They have no relation to life or to reality. Thus they violate every method of expression of which the camera is capable. Those buying Gertrude Stein and the few that will be willing to pay ten dollars for this book will agree with André Breton that photography "needed nothing less than the admirable experience which, in the vastest plastic domain, is that of Man Ray, to dare, beyond the immediate likeness—which is often only that of a day or of certain days—to aim for the profound likeness which physically, morally engages the entire future." (!!!)

SEX IN PRISON, by Joseph F. Fishman. National Library Press. $3.

Mr. Fishman is one of the outstanding penologists in the country. As Inspector of Prisons for the United States government, he had ample opportunity to observe the viciousness of our prison system. He discusses in this book one phase of the subject, sex, with knowledge and experience and even with some sympathy. His conclusion is that only the institution of the Soviet Russian system of vacationing prisoners and giving them opportunity to spend time with their families could help eliminate the rotten sex condition prevailing in the prisons. The author, however, does not urge the change with too great ardor. Is it because he knows that only under a Soviet America, which would remove the economic base upon which rests the criminal political system which runs the penal institutions here now, could genuine change be effected?

ON RELIEF IN ILLINOIS, by Jack Martin. Published by Chicago Pen and Hammer. 5c.

On Relief in Illinois is decidedly of more than local interest. It both elucidates the sort of relief typical throughout the country, and demonstrates the effectiveness of the Unemployment Councils in organizing mass resistance to the capitalist offensive upon the unemployed. Henry Ford's dictum that "these are really good times, but only a few people know it" is indeed the height of wisdom,—where the Henry Fords are the "few people" who "know it." The 295,000 families on relief in Illinois do not. Their subsistence level ranges from $39.65 monthly in Chicago to $2.14 a month elsewhere. Less a 2-percent sales tax. And as usual the Negro worker suffers most. The average relief disbursement per family in the Negro districts of Chicago is one-third to one-half less than that in the white; and in one mining community whose population is 70 percent Negro, rain water is the only source of water supply for most of the company-owned houses. Further on, there is an illuminating commentary upon the bourgeois "social work" system as an active agency of capitalism; while the section on the rôle of the press clearly exposes its insidious attacks upon the working class. But the most significant result of the research is the demonstration from the actual successes of the Chicago Unemployment Councils that only by the constant struggle of the organized masses under the leadership of the Unemployment Councils and the Communist Party can the American bourgeoisie be compelled to grant adequate relief to the unemployed. An appended text of H. R. 7598 (Workers' Unemployment Insurance Bill) completes this admirable pamphlet.

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Book Notes

INTERNATIONAL PUBLISHERS celebrating their tenth anniversary, at a literary tea, at the New School of Social Research, last Friday, attracted outstanding figures in the publishing world, noted writers and editors and personalities in the revolutionary movement. The sponsoring committee included B. W. Huebsch, Bennett A. Cerf, W. W. Norton, Alfred Knopf and Thomas Coward, among publishers; Malcolm Cowley, Lewis Gannett, Freda Kirchwey, Heywood Broun, Robert Morss Lovett, Corliss Lamont, among editors and writers, and Alvin Johnson, Roger Baldwin and Mary Van Kleeck. Alexander Trachtenberg and A. A. Heller of International Publishers were the hosts. Such a celebration, and so representative a gathering in honor of a house devoted to the publication of the works of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin and other revolutionary writings, constitutes an event of real significance in contemporary cultural history.

Welcome news, is the announcement of the negotiations now pending between the Newspaper Guild and the Authors' League, for a form of association between the two organizations. Representing the Newspaper Guild are: Heywood Broun, Carl Randau and Paul Frederickson. Representing the Authors' League are: Elmer Davis, Homer Croy, Arthur Richman, Sidney Howard, Ralph Block and John Howard Lawson. With this move the Authors' League makes the first significant answer to the accusations of inaction and futility frequently leveled against it.

Six or more Nobel judges must have been desperately in search of an author when they chose Pirandello for the new literature award. Ten years ago when his thesis of hallucination as the only reality supplied an apt philosophy for the illusory bases of capitalism, the award would have been suitable. Today, it is another tribute to the power of hallucination, for Pirandello is one of the hollowest of the writers who enjoy an international reputation. It is significant that a titan like Gorky is passed by again, while Bunin and Pirandello, successively, become prizemen.

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Art

Without Benefit of Ritz

YOU have to look carefully to find the door to 47 West 12th Street, sandwiched in among old dumpy buildings, and then you climb two long flights of wooden stairs to a bare shabby loft that serves as headquarters for the Daily Worker Chorus. This is the usual sort of place in which are housed the activities, social, political, and cultural, of the revolutionary movement in its early stages, and every bit of space is made to serve as many uses as possible.

A group of artists, members of the Artists' Union, have assembled here a small exhibition of revolutionary art that is well worth seeing.[1] The work includes drawings, prints, and paintings, ranging from informal sketches to finished mural paintings. These artists show an intelligent awareness of what is happening to and around us today, and if some of the artists show weaknesses in conception and technical ability it is largely due to the "growing pains" of a vital and progressive development and not the decadence and sterility that characterize bourgeois art. Practically all the things hung here merit serious consideration, which is more than can be said for ninety-five percent of the bourgeois exhibitions.

Some of the artists are still groping for adequate forms to express their ideas and feelings. Ben Zion is not very successful in his abstraction in which he has included the masthead of the Daily Worker as part of the "montage," in the manner of Braque and Picasso. Remo Farruggio's fine color and skillful painting in "Peasants Greeting the Red Army" lose some of their effectiveness through failing to characterize adequately the people who are apparently intended as Chinese. Raphael Soyer's "Waiting For Depressions To End" is up to his usual standard of capable craftsmanship but is open to the criticism of being defeatist in spirit. Not so, on the other hand, Jack Reynolds' "Day In, Day Out," which though it deals with the deadening, brutalizing grind of the worker's life leaves a much more positive feeling, a feeling of indignation, in the onlooker. Ben Shahn's drawing "Good Work Commissioner" is an excellent piece of satire, additionally effective because so timely.

Neither Tamotzu nor Marantz are represented by their usual standard of work. Tamotzu's study for a mural suffers from confusing composition, though individual portions are good; and Marantz's lithograph "Consumer's Market" deserves better treatment than he has given it. Joseph Meert has a good tempera panel, genuine in its characterization. Joseph Vogel's large mural painting "America In Revolt" is a splendid achievement and perhaps the outstanding thing in the show. Significant aspects of the class struggle are here composed into an organic whole, each detail and episode is excellent both in itself and as part of the logical structure of the entire painting. Workers' organizations should take advantage of an opportunity like this to buy such a painting, or better still to have it executed life size on a fine big wall. It deserves to be. Phil Sawyer's "Police Lineup" uses to good advantage a scene from *Stevedore*. Isidore Margoles' "Enforcing 7a" is strong and well designed but a bit careless in craftsmanship. Ernest Trubach and Giorgio Cavallon present competent paintings of a demonstration, and M. Richter an interesting study in pencil of a mural on a similar subject. Sara Berman's mural panel is full of genuine and militant feeling, but leans too heavily on lettered signs to tell her story. Kainen's drawing of a slain picket, and Martin's "Lynching, 1934," are effective and well handled. Solman's "NRA Leisure" is too confused in forms and lacking in color to make his meaning felt. Carl Fox's fine linoleum cut "Mother," Gellert's drawing of a Kentucky miner's battle, and Phil Bard's color sketch for one of his murals in the Daily Worker building contribute to the interest and worth of the exhibition.

It would be very nice to have fine walls and proper indirect lighting and all the necessaries of a good gallery in which to show these works but we'll have that later. Meanwhile if you want to see some vital living art pay this show a visit.

[1] Open evenings, 7 to 10 o'clock.

Marsh

Reginald Marsh is one of the most popular exponents of the school of genre painting which finds its picture material in the "lower dregs" of life. This school developed largely as a reaction to the soft, decadent prettiness of the Academy and as a return to realism as opposed to the abstract tendencies of modernism. It may be compared to the school of literature which turned "hard-boiled" (e. g. Hemingway) in reaction to the stale and spurious romanticism current in the early nineteen-twenties. Marsh's work stems from Rowlandson and Hogarth and is in the realistic tradition of Bellows, Luks, Sloan and others. He enjoys the depiction of such subjects as "down-and-outers" on the Bowery and Union Square, nude wenches and their audiences at burlesque shows, the "mob" at Coney Island, the circus, etc. He seldom tells you what he thinks of his material. "Here it is; look at it" he says in effect. Infrequently he reveals a sense of satire that indicates a more positive attitude toward his subject, but it is mostly rather mild satire, seldom pointed, and sometimes of dubious character (as in some of his Negro subjects.)

His recent exhibit at the Rehn gallery continues his typical characteristics and subject matter. His color and forms in his tempera paintings have an unpleasant tendency to become muddy and confused on occasion, but in his best work these faults are not very much in evidence. This reviewer liked best the small painting entitled "Those Who Pay To Be Seen" which shows some of the fat, stuffed shirts that usually display themselves in opera and theatre boxes. Here the satire comes closest to being sharp and directed. If Marsh developed this side of his work more and were to show us something more than just the surface aspect of the people and things he paints he would probably lose favor with the powers that be in the bourgeois art world, but his work would gain tremendously in depth and significance.

Prints

At the Downtown Gallery the American Print Makers group offers a number of interesting things besides and above the usual run of competent nudes, still lifes, landscapes, etc. Outstanding for significant content as well as technical quality are prints by Biddle, Cikovsky, Dehn, Dwight, Orozco, Spruance, and the inimitable Gropper.

SPEPHEN ALEXANDER

NEW YEAR'S EVE

REVOLUTIONARY MUSIC HALL VARIETIES

Benefit Scottsboro-Herndon Fund

20 Percent Proceeds to Fund—Ben Davis—Editor Negro Liberator, Chairman

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"Deserter"
"Soviets on Parade"
Life in the Soviet Union

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BUNIN PUPPETS
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ANNA SOKOLOW DANCE GROUP
Court Room Scene
"They Shall Not Die"
by John Wexley

Melvin Levy, Author, "Gold Eagle Guy"
Master of Ceremonies

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Twenty-eighth Street and Broadway

December 31 8:30 P. M.

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N.T.W.I.U., 131 West 28th Street
Health Center, 50 East 13th Street
Workers' Bookshop, 50 East 13th Street

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The Theatre

The Most Important Play in New York

IN JANUARY, 1918, six thousand sailors in the Austrian fleet were stationed in the Bay of Cattaro, an inlet of the Adriatic Sea. They were thoroughly sickened by four years of war, virtually trapped in outmoded vessels, miserably clothed and fed. Their officers, on the other hand, caroused freely, expropriated provisions belonging to the crew, disregarded their needs and deprived them of the right to air their grievances. Learning of the heroic anti-war strike of the Vienna workers, the crews laid plans to seize the ships as a means of stopping the war. On February 1 they mutinied, placed their officers under guard and hoisted the red flag.

Several years later Friedrich Wolf, a German playwright exiled for being a Jew, recorded the sailors' uprising in a play following closely the actual facts. Produced in most of the European capitals, *Sailors of Cattaro* had been offered to several New York producers (among them the Theatre Guild and the Group Theatre) only to be rejected. It remained for the Theatre Union to recognize the significance of this play both as an anti-war weapon and as drama.

As dramatic writing *Sailors of Cattaro* (Civic Repertory) goes beyond both *Peace on Earth* and *Stevedore,* being richer and firmer in characterizations, and broader in its immediate implications. Although it never produces the genuine thrill of the final scene of *Stevedore, Sailors of Cattaro* creates some of the most acute emotional moments in the contemporary theatre—and these it builds up solidly out of the suffering flesh and blood of sailors desperate to put an end to their condition, to stop the war, and strike a blow for a workers' world.

After a first scene (on the flagship Saint George) which provides the background for the uprising—the excruciating insolence of the Lieutenant, the complaints of the men and their determination to take matters into their own hands—scene two by judicious use of parody produces an intensification of the opposing forces. And when the Captain gently chides the Lieutenant for acting hastily rather than "psychologically" the full basis for the mutiny has been masterfully established. With one of their number ordered to the fortress, the crew selects the Captain's birthday as a fit time for seizing power. Their strategy works perfectly. They go wild with joy as they pull down the Imperial war banner and hoist the red flag of victory.

But the second phase of the work menaces their achievement. Success now depends on the solidarity of all the ships in the bay as well as cooperation from the rank and file in the naval base at Pola. A Sailors Council, hastily selected, delegates power to the original leader of the uprising (bo'sun Rasch) but causes delays which twice prevent the ship from sailing safely out of the bay. Meanwhile the naval administration has lost no time countering with fresh "reliable" troops, bottling up the bay with submarines and isolating the Saint George from radio communication. The Imperial Navy finally sends its ultimatum: restore the imprisoned officers to full power, in which case complete amnesty will be granted, or the ship will be blown up by 10 p. m. Three of the Sailors Council refuse to listen, but the majority, traduced by false assurances and unwilling to die for their cause, finally capitulates. The red flag is lowered; four of the insurgents are led off to execution.

No abstract of the action could possibly convey the emotional impact of the play or its meaning in terms of ideological conflict. A half dozen masterly dramatic touches solidify the action, and secondary threads tighten and color the dramatic fabric. There is one failure which comes to mind when considering the play in retrospect: never does one get the feel of masses of men marshalled in rebellion and collaborating in decisions. There are six hundred sailors aboard the Saint George: one misses the physical impact of these human masses overjoyed with victory or menaced by frustration.

One is tempted to discuss several important problems provoked by the play, but this is impossible in a review of this length. Nevertheless the conflicts in tactics growing out of the problem of leadership during the crisis demand some comment. Stonawski (aviation pilot), the clearest thinker among the men, realizes that ideologically undeveloped sailors must learn the "trade of government" as they have learned the trade of sailoring. In his quiet way he attempts to convince Rasch that the existence of a Sailors Council does not mean that "they shouldn't have a leader? God damn it, some one has to be at the wheel!" His clarity disarms the former ensign who is willing to throw the whole council in irons if it would bring success: that would be to replace one set of goldstripers with another. But his central analysis, a point which carries the explanation of the whole conflict, is never given the emphasis it requires: that the difficulties are not inherent in the Sailors Council as an institution but rather in this particular Sailors Council which is not a real council at all, being composed of men indiscriminately selected who neither see the whole picture nor appreciate what the strike really means. We wish Stonawski's clarification had been better emphasized for the sake of politically inexperienced audiences which stand a fair chance of branding the institution of collective decision impracticable and ruinous.

The real error, however, was made by Wolf in having posed the problem as he did. He has failed to indicate the need for politically developed leadership, such as the Bolshe-

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viks gave to the revolting sailors and soldiers of Czarist Russia. As Wolf's play stands it reveals the influence of "Austro-Marxism," which differed in principle and tactic from the Marxism of the successful Bolsheviks. They realized that in every revolutionary endeavor leadership must be delegated to politically clear individuals and groups guided by principles and tactics of the revolutionary vanguard.

Certain bourgeois critics have criticized Michael Blankfort's adaptation as being sometimes "too literary." The present reviewer wishes that these critics would compare Friedrich Wolf's version with the present production, for the allegedly "scholarly" passages are Wolf's (in Keene Wallis' translation.) Blankfort has considerably clarified and intensified the original, particularly in the characters of Stonawski and Toni (whose chief reason for revolt was his hunger to see his young son).

The production as a whole is admirable. Mordecai Gorelick's single set, used with variations throughout the play, is nothing less than magnificent. As the central character Tom Powers is impressive, and there are brilliant performances by Charles Thompson (the scab sailor), Robert Reed (Maté), James MacDonald (Lieutenant), and Howard da Silva (Sepp). Indeed the members of the crew are convincing individuals at intervals mastering or mastered by their situation.

The Sailors of Cattaro is by far the most important play in New York. It is also the most engrossing and inspiring anti-war drama that this reviewer has seen.

STANLEY BURNSHAW.

Other Current Shows

Recruits. Artef Theatre (247 W. 48 St.). Exquisitely beautiful in conception and execution, this play analyzes the social forces in the Ghetto during the period 1800-1850. Your attendance required if you understand Yiddish. Cheapest seat 50 cents.

Group Recital, by the Workers Dance League. Town Hall, Dec. 23, 8:30 p. m. First group recital of the season, consisting of new compositions. The impressive advances made by these dancers should be sufficient reason for all dance-lovers—pink as well as red—to attend. Cheapest seat 35 cents.

Gold Eagle Guy, by Melvin Levy. Group Theatre (at Morosco Theatre). Portrait of the capitalist-type stripped of its "business ethics," etc., based on the career of Dollar, merchant marine prince. Essentially a one-man show (impressively performed by J. Edward Bromberg), with the central character somewhat too fascinating a scoundrel. Nevertheless, important as a study of capitalist corruption—and thoroughly enjoyable as theatre. A $55,000 offer for moving picture rights raises an important problem for author and Group Theatre to solve, for the central character can easily be converted into a heroic rugged individualist by the poisonous philosophers of Hollywood. If Levy and the Group Theatre agree to terms which allow Hollywood to pervert *Gold Eagle Guy* they stand an excellent chance of undermining the status which this play has given them.

Merrily We Roll Along. Music Box Theatre. A well made melodrama which hides a series of trite observations behind a smokescreen of technical tricks. Old adage, "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his soul" is applied to certain contemporary figures, George Gershwin, Dorothy Parker et al. Worth seeing if only for Walter Abel's acting and an outstanding exhibition of George S. Kaufman's sterling talent wasted.

Dodsworth. Shubert Theatre. This hardy perennial is kept alive by the magnetic personalities of Walter Huston and Nan Sunderland. All about a sentimental capitalist who ended his days in peace on the quiet Riviera. A gentle reminder that all rich men do not go to jail.

Dark Victory. Little Theatre. Tallulah Bankhead has what it takes to make a so and so play seem important.

The Children's Hour. Maxine Elliott Theatre. A near tragedy which is piling them in partly because of its touching on the sacrosanct borders of perversion and partly because Kathryn Emery and Ann Revere are good actresses. A nasty little schoolgirl wrecks the lives of two school teachers, and Miss Hellman, the author, covers many a technical hole with some faultless dialogue.

Soviet Musical Satire

THE new Soviet film at the Cameo, *The Czar Wants to Sleep,* is the first example of the new trend in Soviet comedy, the musical picture.

It is also the first film of Alexander Feinzimmer, and a remarkably mature job. The humor is subtle and penetrating. The style seems to have been influenced in about equal parts by that famous Russian satirical weekly, Krokodil and the Meyerhold Theatre.

The film deals with Paul I, the "Mad Czar." It opens with a picture of court life, goose-stepping guards, display and intrigue. The Czar is temperamental; when he sleeps there must be no noise. Paul's mistress has a lady-in-waiting, who has a lover, a lieutenant in the Guards. She pinches him and he screams and awakens the Czar. Paul demands a list of the officers on duty. The name of a non-existing officer, Kijhe, appears in the list by an error. The clever Count Phalen uses this accident to get his nephew, the lieutenant, out of trouble. He accuses "Kijhe" of disturbing His Majesty because of radical tendencies. This invisible "Kijhe" is sentenced to one hundred lashes and then to Siberia. The rest of the adventures of this invisible Kijhe, his recall from Siberia, his rise to the rank of nobility, his marriage, his death, and finally his demotion to the rank of an ordinary private, are filmed with ingenuity and with deadly political satire.

Special mention must be made of the musical score by Sergei Prokofief. It is a contribution to the development of the sound film.

PETER ELLIS

Other Current Films

Crainquebille (Du World): The famous Anatole France satire remade as a sound film and brought up to date. The story of the arrest of a poor street peddler and the irony of class justice is told with a great deal of restraint. The liberal outlook of the director makes for many a lost situation. It also dilutes the potential powerful satire to an almost fragile tragedy. However it is certainly well worth your time.

The Private Life of Don Juan (London Films-United Artists): The Alexander Korda (director) bubble being deflated. Douglas Fairbanks making a dull attempt to be the *The Thief of Bagdad.*

The President Vanishes (Paramount): Hollywood salutes President Roosevelt with the slickest bit of demagogy in years.

Wednesday's Child (RKO-Radio): Once more the movies gives us a study of child psychology in a divorce situation. This film version is a sentimentalized edition of last season's unconvincing play and not as good as Gaumont-British's *Little Friend.*

Soviet Russia and Siberia (Julien Bryan): The addition of a competent photographer to his expedition provides Julien Bryan with better and more interesting views of Russia and Siberia. The cutting is very bad, the photography unimaginative but clear. These films are worth seeing.

P. E.

NEW THEATRE SYMPOSIUM

"GOLD EAGLE GUY"

MELVIN LEVY
Author

LEON ALEXANDER
Daily Worker Critic

N. BUCHWALD
Freiheit Critic

Friday, Dec. 28, 8:30 P. M.

NEW THEATRE HEADQUARTERS
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Between Ourselves

NEXT week's issue marks the completion of a full year of THE NEW MASSES as a weekly magazine, and we will present an accounting to our readers, a statement of how we have been getting on, in connection with a proposal we have to lay before them.

This will be the fourth quarterly issue of 48 pages. The full manuscript of the debate on "H. R. 7598," the Workers' Bill for Unemployment and Social Insurance, between Mary van Kleeck and Dr. I. M. Rubinow, is now in hand and will appear next week, on the eve of the National Congress on Unemployment and Social Insurance in Washington.

Karl Billinger's story of the notorious Columbia House, in Berlin (where Thaelmann was held and tortured) is to be in next week's issue. It is a first hand narrative which will form a chapter of Billinger's book, *Fatherland* to be published by Farrar and Rinehart, and by Editions due Carrefour, Paris, early next Spring. It is called *In the Nazis' Torture House.*

Granville Hicks will have a survey of proletarian literature in 1934 and Stanley Burnshaw has prepared a critical appraisal of Edna St. Vincent Millay.

We have had in preparation for some time a full study of one of the outstanding cases of Negro persecution in years—the Crawford case, in which the defendant was finally sentenced to life imprisonment. This is one case where the bourgeois-liberal organization, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, was in full charge of the defense. Incomplete reports have appeared from time to time, but the real story of how Crawford was "defended" into a life term has never been told. We hope to have this ready in time for next week's issue. It is documented.

For the information of those who may have missed previous announcements: a prize contest for a proletarian novel is being conducted jointly by THE NEW MASSES and The John Day Company, publishers.

Any novel dealing with any section of the American working-class may be submitted in this contest. For the purposes of the contest it is not sufficient that the novel be written from the point of view of the proletariat; it must actually be concerned with the proletariat. The term proletariat, however, is defined in its broadest sense, to include for example, the poorer farmers, the unemployed, and even the lower fringes of the petty bourgeoisie as well as industrial workers. The characters, moreover, need not all be drawn from the working class so long as the book is primarily concerned with working-class life.

The rules of the contest follow:

1. All manuscripts must be submitted by April 1, 1935.

2. Each manuscript must be signed with a pseudonym; accompanying each manuscript there must be a sealed envelope with the pseudonym on the outside and the author's real name and address inside.

3. All novels submitted must be in the English language, must be typed, and must be not less than 60,000 words.

4. All novels submitted must deal with the American proletariat.

5. All manuscripts entered in the contest are also offered to The John Day Company for publication, terms to be arranged between the author and The John Day Company, and any author under contract to another publisher must obtain a release before entering the contest.

6. The decision of the five judges will be by majority vote. The judges reserve the right to reject all manuscripts.

7. The prize of $750 will be paid to the author of the winning novel upon his signing of a standard Authors' League contract with The John Day Company, which will publish the novel. The prize will be in addition to all royalties.

New Masses Lectures

William Browder, business manager of THE NEW MASSES is going on a lecture tour in January. Browder will speak on "The Middle Class Must Choose." His tentative itinerary is listed below, and organizations wishing to arrange meetings for him in these cities are asked to communicate with THE NEW MASSES Lecture Bureau.

Jan. 11—Milwaukee	Jan. 24—Phoenix
" 13—Minneapolis	" 26—Denver
" 15—Butte	" 27—Wichita
" 17—Spokane	" 28—Kansas City
" 18—Seattle	" 29—Omaha
" 19—Portland	" 30—St. Louis
" 21—San Francisco	" 31—Indianapolis
" 23—Los Angeles	Feb. 1—Pittsburgh

Browder will speak in Providence, R. I., Dec. 30.

Michael Gold will speak on "Crisis in Modern Literature," Friday evening, Dec. 28, at the Prospect Workers Club, 1157 So. Boulevard in the Bronx.

Joseph North will speak on "Proletarian Literature" Sunday evening, Dec. 23 at the Bronx Workers Club, 1610 Boston Road, the Bronx.

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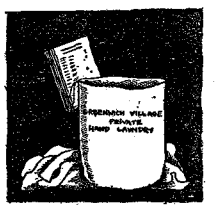
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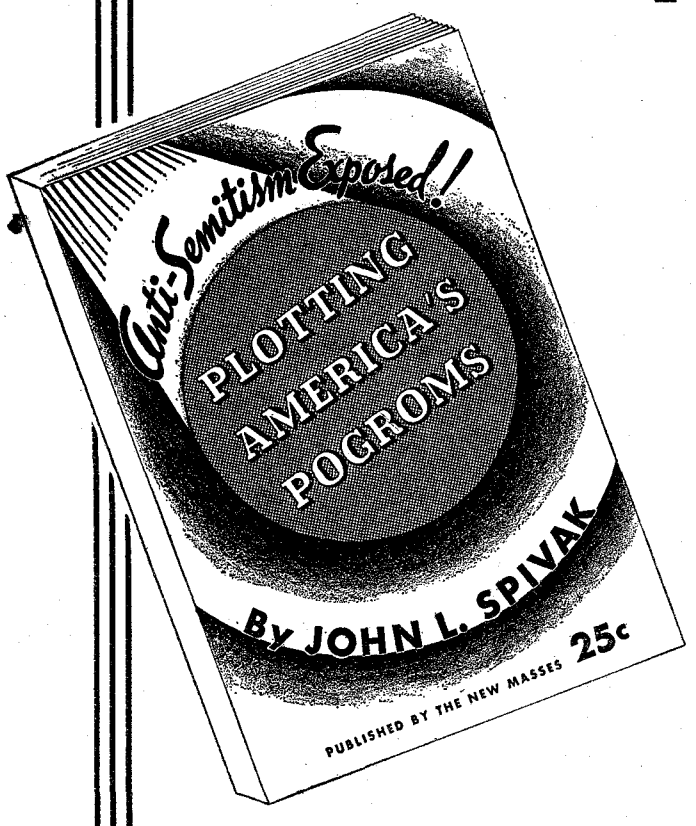

which is now out. THE NEW MASSES has published the revelations by John L. Spivak on *Plotting America's Pogrom* which created a nation-wide stir on publication in the magazine. The pamphlet is of 96 pages, with a two-color cover, and retails for 25 cents. It should have the widest possible distribution. Those wishing to get this pamphlet in quantities should send in their orders to THE NEW MASSES, 31 East 27th Street, with cash at the following rates: In quantities up to 5 at 25 cents each, plus postage (2c per copy); quantities of 6-25, 22 cents postpaid; 26-100, 20 cents; 101-300, 18 cents; 301-500, 16 cents; 501-1,000, 14 cents; 1,001 or more, 12 cents.

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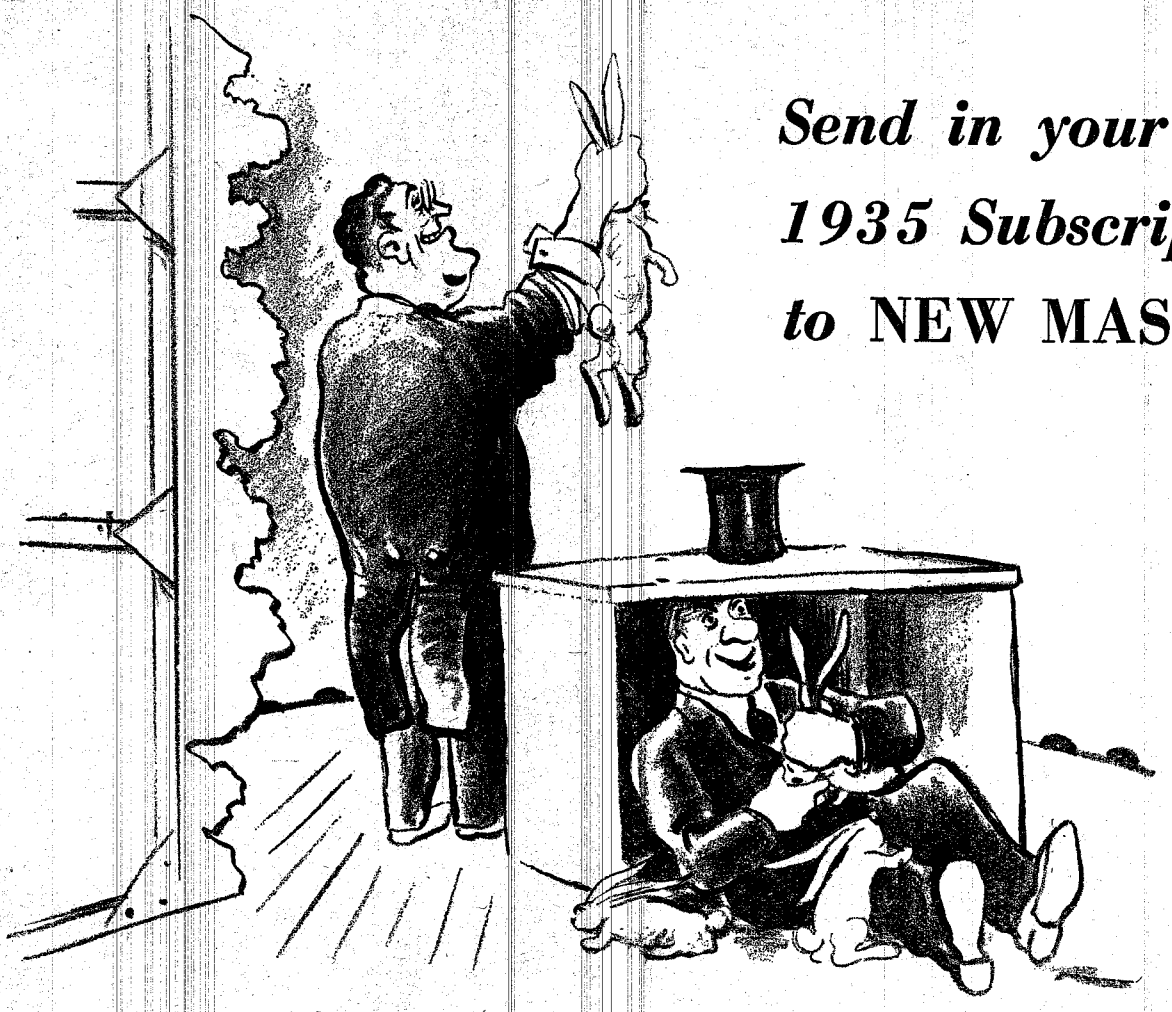

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